

# New Perspectives in Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew

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# ON PRAGMATICS AND GRAMMAR IN BIBLICAL HEBREW: PREDICATE ADJECTIVES AND STATIVE VERBS

*Ethan Jones*

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## 1.0. Preliminary Remarks

Syntax and semantics vie for the attention of Hebraists. This means that pragmatics, while important, typically remains underappreciated and understudied.<sup>1</sup> Pragmatics, broadly defined, “is the systematic study of meaning by virtue of, or dependent on, the use of language,” which includes “implicature, presupposition, speech acts, and deixis” (Huang 2015, 2). In Hebrew studies, most pragmatic research centres on *information structure* [IS].<sup>2</sup> That is the “packaging of information that meets the immediate communicative needs of the interlocutors” (Féry and Krifka 2008, 123).

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<sup>1</sup> Some well-known exceptions are Muraoka (1985) and Khan (1988).

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Shimasaki (2002); Holmstedt (2005; 2009; 2011); Van Hecke (2010); Hatav (2017); Hornkohl (2018); Khan (2019); Moshavi (2010).

Two important, though often debated, categories of IS are *topic* and *focus*. Though variously defined, *topic* generally has to do with what the communication is about (Mosahvi 2010).<sup>3</sup>

(1) וּבְעוֹז עָלָה הַשַּׁעֲרָה

‘No sooner had Boaz gone up to the gate...’ (Ruth 3.17)

In (1), Holmstedt (2009, 130) observes that the *topic* (Boaz) “orients the reader to which character is acting at a major transition in the book.”

*Focus*, on the other hand, denotes a choice from at least two options, as Hornkohl (2018, 34) illustrates in (2):<sup>4</sup>

(2) וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל-רֵעֵהוּ מִי עָשָׂה הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וַיִּדְרְשׁוּ וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ גִדְעוֹן בֶּן-  
יֹאָשׁ עָשָׂה הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה:

‘So they said to one another, “Who has done this?” After searching and inquiring, they were told, “Gideon son of Joash did it.”’ (Judg. 6.29)

Research on IS in Biblical Hebrew relies primarily on the establishment of *common ground* [CG] and syntax and not, for

<sup>3</sup> Firbas (1992), on the other hand, frames *topic* in terms of *given* or *new* information, and not ‘aboutness’.

<sup>4</sup> Buth (1999, 81) adds more detail to the contrastive feature of *focus*, writing, “It maybe contraexpected, that is, the speaker/writer assumes his or her audience maybe expecting something different and so marks it for *Focus*. It may also be *new* information that is specially marked to fill in, or to complete, assumed missing information. It may also be old information that needs special reinforcement, through repetition.” While scholars typically describe *focus* as contrastive, Hornkohl (2018) observes that *topic* can also be so.

example, on intonation, which is critical for the study of pragmatics in non-ancient languages.<sup>5</sup> CG designates the shared information which “is continuously modified in the course of communication” and includes presuppositions, assertions, and discourse referents (Féry and Krifka 2008, 125). Speakers/authors manage CG in part through syntax. Thus, it is no surprise that much of the research on IS in Biblical Hebrew deals with word order.<sup>6</sup>

Let us take (3) as an example.

(3) אֲתִּי שְׁלַח יְהוָה לְמַשְׁחָךְ לְמֶלֶךְ

‘The LORD sent me to anoint you king.’ (1 Sam. 15.1)

The object (אֲתִּי) in (3) begins the speech. Irrespective of one’s view of the basic word order in Biblical Hebrew,<sup>7</sup> virtually everyone would agree that אֲתִּי has been moved to the front of the sentence for some pragmatic purpose.<sup>8</sup> However, scholars expend

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<sup>5</sup> Van Hecke (2010, 58) writes that intonation being “one of the most important clues to the informational structure of clauses is not available to us any longer, limiting the analytical detail of pragmatic research in Classical Hebrew.” For more on the role on intonation in IS see Lang and Pheby (2011) and Blühdorn (2011).

<sup>6</sup> See especially Shimasaki (2002); Holmstedt (2005; 2009; 2011); Hatav (2017).

<sup>7</sup> Be it Verb-Subject-Object (VSO) or Subject-Verb-Object (SVO). For the important terminological distinction of ‘dominant’ word order as opposed to ‘basic’ word order in Biblical Hebrew, see Khan and Van der Merwe (2020).

<sup>8</sup> De Regt (2019, 63), for example, argues that “It is not just the participant reference device itself... but also its place at the beginning of the sentence which is determined by the context beyond the sentence.”

considerable energy on the specific reason why, for example, *וְהִיא* is fronted and how that relates to the default word order.

At a general level, Hebraists observe that a *topic* is typically *given* (or old) information and *focus* usually brings *new* information (Bandstra 1982). Holmstedt (2009), however, rightly separates two layers of pragmatics when analysing the Hebrew Bible. The first layer comprises *given* information (*theme*) and *new* information (*rheme*); the second includes *topic* and *focus*.<sup>9</sup> While I shall strictly define *given* and *new* information in §2, it should be made quite clear the *given/new* layer is not one and the same as *topic/focus* (Gross 2001; Moshavi 2010).<sup>10</sup> For example, while *focus* often correlates with *new* information, *focus* items “may either be brand new... identifiable or discourse active” (Van der Merwe and Talstra 2002–2003, 76). In fact, recent experimental

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<sup>9</sup> While I find it preferable to separate and analyse the two layers, it is worth noting that Erteschik-Shir (2007, 7) sees things differently, as she argues that “topic and focus are the only information structure primitives needed to account for all information structure phenomena.”

<sup>10</sup> Féry and Krifka (2008, 126) note that “given expressions, like pronouns, can be focused.” See also Chen, Li, and Yang (2012). The separation of the two layers appears rather prominently in the work of Gómez-González (2001). A. Jones (2015, 70) writes that “Unlike theme and rheme, topic and focus have proven difficult to define with precision.” Whilst I may agree with his latter observation, the former is quite mistaken. One need only to survey Gómez-González (2001) to notice the complexities and lack of agreement in defining *given* (*theme*) with any precision.

research has verified that “focus and newness are different concepts and suggest[s] making a distinction between contrastive focus and new information” (Chen, Li, and Yang 2012, 6).<sup>11</sup>

The two pragmatic layers are illustrated in (4):

- (4) Abigail and Benjamin were drinking juice. Abigail wanted to drink another cup.

*Abigail* in the second sentence is old information or *theme* (Holmstedt 2009, 127). The rest of the second sentence, *wanted to drink another cup*, presents *new* information (*rheme*). The status of *Abigail* in the second layer of pragmatics (*topic* or *focus*) depends on the rest of the context.

- (5) And Benjamin wanted another one as well.

If (5) follows (4), then *Abigail* and *Benjamin* are the *topic* (Holmstedt 2009, 127). However, the second layer changes if (6) were to follow (4)–(5).<sup>12</sup>

- (6) But Benjamin wanted milk.

On account of (6), Holmstedt (2009, 127) finds that “the pragmatic context changes significantly, and accordingly, so does the

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<sup>11</sup> Additional experimental research corroborates this claim. For example, Toepel and Alter (2013, 227–29) differentiate between *new* information and contrastive information. They develop a “tripartition of focus into broad, narrow new, and contrastive [focus]... to capture the interactions of semantic-pragmatic, phonological, and phonetic aspects of focus in discourse.”

<sup>12</sup> *Topic* as described by Holmstedt is a clause-level rather than discourse-level notion.

total pragmatic information conveyed by both *Abigail* and *Benjamin*. The situation is now a contrastive one, with the entities *Abigail* and *Benjamin* set over against each other. This is *Focus*.”<sup>13</sup>

Hatav (2017, 216–17) adds that *rheme* can stay in its syntactic place (Subject-Verb-Object, according to her), but *focus* is moved up (Verb-Subject-Object). Similarly, theme is not influenced by syntax, but a *topic* is moved to clause-initial position (cf. Abraham 2009).

In addition, Gross (2001) distinguishes the two pragmatic layers, though, like Holmstedt and Hatav, still majors on *topic/focus*. Nevertheless, Van Hecke (2010, 83) comments that Gross “adds to the descriptive fine-tuning needed for an accurate description of pragmatic function.” In his own research, Van Hecke (2010) consistently combines the two pragmatic layers with labels such as ‘New Topic’, ‘Given Topic’, and ‘Resumed Topic’.<sup>14</sup>

As illustrated above, nearly all the scholarly attention has been on the second layer of pragmatics (*topic/focus*). When the first layer (*given/new*) does appear, it is (at best) a prerequisite to move on to an analysis of *topic* and *focus*. There is, however, at least one significant exception.

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<sup>13</sup> Holmstedt’s labelling of *topic* and *focus* in (4)–(6) is not my own. I simply wish to illustrate how a scholar distinguishes the layers of pragmatics, and especially the emphasis on the second layer, namely, *topic* and *focus*. For the more appropriate and fine-grained description of “contrastive *topic*” as it relates to “Benjamin” in (6), see Khan and Van der Merwe (2020, 371–72) and Hornkohl (2018, 34–38).

<sup>14</sup> These categories are adapted from Dik (1989, 267). See also Lambrecht (1994, 77–114) for terms such as ‘active’, ‘accessible’, ‘unused’, and ‘brand new’.

In 1968, Ernst Jenni laid out his claim for the function of the *pi<sup>c</sup>el binyan*. His work has encouraged many responses, but his comments on pragmatics have gone mostly unnoticed.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, Jenni has continued to develop his ideas. In 2007 (re-published in 2012), analysing *given/new* and the grammar of Biblical Hebrew, he attempted to confirm the relationship of pragmatics and grammar:

(7) הִנֵּה חָכֵם אַתָּה מִדָּנְיָאֵל

‘You are indeed wiser than Daniel’ (Ezek. 28.3)<sup>16</sup>

(8) וַיְחָכֵם מִכָּל־הָאָדָם

‘He was wiser than anyone else’ (1 Kgs 5.11)

He claims the predicate adjective חָכֵם in (7) conveys *new* information. Specifically, חָכֵם “bringt einen originellen neuen Vergleich” (Jenni 2012, 80). Whereas וַיְחָכֵם in (8) “bringt nur die logische Fortsetzung zum vorangehenden” in v.10: וַיִּתְּרֵב חָכְמַת וְשִׁלְמֹה מִחָכְמַת כָּל־בְּנֵי־יִקְדָּם וּמְכָל חָכְמַת מִצְרַיִם ‘Solomon’s wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt’ (Jenni 2012, 80). Put differently, an author/speaker of Biblical Hebrew would use the predicate adjective חָכֵם instead of *wayyiqtol* (וַיְחָכֵם) or *qatal* (חָכַם) for *pragmatic* reasons and not simply semantics. Thus, the difference between the two grammatical forms in (7) and (8) is not limited to ‘are

<sup>15</sup> See Joosten (1998) and Beckman (2015).

<sup>16</sup> Translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

wiser' and 'was wiser', but includes the dimension of *new* versus *given* information.<sup>17</sup>

Yet Jenni goes further, arguing that pragmatics is built into the *binyan* system:

(9) וַיִּתְחַבֵּא הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים

'and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Yhwh God' (Gen. 3.8)

(10) וְאִירָא כִּי־עֵרָם אָנֹכִי וְאֶחְבֵּא:

'And I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.' (Gen. 3.10)

Like the predicate adjective/stative verb pair in (7)–(8), the *hitpa<sup>c</sup>el* in (9) marks *new* pragmatic information. The *nif<sup>c</sup>al* in (10), however, "ist keine neue Information, sondern wird als logische Folge unter den gegebenen Umständen angesehen" (2012, 153). To be sure, these observations on the predicate adjective, stative verb, *hitpa<sup>c</sup>el*, and *nif<sup>c</sup>al* concern not merely the pragmatics of the particular cases in examples (7)–(10). Rather, there is a much more comprehensive claim: that the predicate adjective and the *hitpa<sup>c</sup>el* always bring *new* pragmatic information, whereas the stative verb and the *nif<sup>c</sup>al* exclusively denote *given* information.

While these arguments have not had scholarly engagement, I believe they deserve consideration for at least two reasons. First and most important, clarity is needed on whether grammatical

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<sup>17</sup> Another distinction is that the former is a verbless clause and the latter a verbal clause. Jenni (1968 and especially 1977) makes the point that *new* versus *given* is a critical pragmatic difference between the two types of clauses.

forms themselves mark pragmatic information in Biblical Hebrew. The relationship between grammar and pragmatics, as linguists have ably demonstrated (Ariel 2008; Deppermann 2011), should not be quickly dismissed. Second, the first layer of pragmatics (*given* and *new*) calls for more assiduity, lest it be deemed irrelevant or conflated with the second (*topic* and *focus*).

I wish to be quite plain that this article is not merely an analytical check on Jenni's research. Rather, I hope to use it as a jumping off point for a scholarly conversation on pragmatics and grammar. The relationship between the two has not gone unnoticed by Hebraists.

It is not unusual, for example, to claim that in a verbless clause (i.e., null-copula) the subject is *given* information, whereas the predicate is *new* information (Zewi 1994, 145; Gross 2001, 44). What is more, scholars are certainly aware that a subject pronoun (e.g., הוּא) is often *given* information as well as the pragmatic *topic*. That said, Revell (1999, 306) notes "The *topic* of a clause is... usually its subject; this is not necessarily the case." In addition, Hornkohl (2018, 35) describes *topic* as the "marked point of reference for ensuing information," which can apply to temporal setting (Exod. 16.13) and scene setting (Gen. 3.14–17) as well. Thus, *topic* and subject are not one in the same.

The comments above show that Hebraists are conscious of a relationship between pragmatics and grammar, but it arguably remains on the periphery. In what follows I centre my study on

pragmatics, especially *given/new* information, and the relation (or lack thereof) to the grammar of Biblical Hebrew.<sup>18</sup>

## 2.0. On Method

In attempting to lay bare Jenni's far-reaching pragmatic claims above, I shall analyse the core of his argument: predicate adjectives and stative verbs. Specifically, I wish to see if predicate adjectives *always* bring pragmatically *new* information to the context, and, in turn, if stative verbs *always* bear *given* information. To go about this study, I make use of the detailed guidelines for IS analysis formulated by Michael Götze et al. (2007). Regarding the first layer of pragmatics (which is the only layer we concern ourselves with), I categorise the information using *given*, *accessible*, and *new*. The first two have various sub-divisions that allow for specificity and have criteria for making decisions on IS.

*Given* [GIV], for example, is divided into *active* [ACT] and *inactive* [INACT]. *Active* applies to information that has appeared explicitly in its exact form within the last or same sentence.<sup>19</sup>

(11) John went home. John [GIV-ACT] drank coffee.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> In this article, I will not touch on the pragmatics of the *binyanim*. Rather, I will concentrate on the area of grammar on which Jenni bases his argument.

<sup>19</sup> For an important study of differentiation within givenness, see Prince (1981). Much of what she discusses as *given*—be it predictable, salient, or shared—is covered in Götze et al. (2007).

<sup>20</sup> The following examples of IS guidelines are inspired by Götze et al. (2007) unless otherwise noted.

*Inactive* is similar, but does not occur within the immediate sentence. Typically, Götze et al. suggest looking backward for approximately five sentences.

- (12) So John went into the kitchen. It was clean. John [GIV-INACT] was happy.

*Accessible information* [ACC], which itself is a bridge between the most often used binary choices of *given* and *new*, has numerous sub-divisions. First is *situative* [SIT], which occurs within discourse.

- (13) Could you hand me the salt [ACC-SIT], please?

Second is *aggregation* [AGGRG]:

- (14) John went shopping with Emily. They [ACC-AGGRG] bought a lot of gifts.

Third is *inferable* [INF]. This involves bridging relations, such as *part-whole relation* (the garden... its entrance), *set-relation* (family... children), and *entity-attribute* (the garden... its scent).

Fourth is *general* [GEN]. Here, the speaker understands that the hearer knows the referent from his or her world knowledge:

- (15) The sun [ACC-GEN] set.<sup>21</sup>

The final broad category of IS is *new*. This, of course, is any participant that cannot be categorised as *given* or *accessible*.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Taken explicitly from Götze et al. (2007).

<sup>22</sup> I agree with an anonymous reviewer that a graded category for *new* information would be beneficial. However, I have not found appropriate sub-categories for such. Therefore, I content myself with *new* as a category.

These categories as presented above may seem straightforward and unproblematic. However, in analysing Biblical Hebrew, the task is far from easy. Setting aside the well-known issues in researching the Hebrew Bible, one major difficulty for us is the extra-textual world of pragmatics. The criteria of information from Götze et al. primarily concerns the ‘internal’ (i.e., what is mentioned earlier in the narrative or speech). The ‘external’, however, is information that a narrator and reader share—though not made explicit (Revell 1999, 307). The intersection of the external and internal via pragmatic presupposition is significant (Van der Merwe and Talstra 2002–2003, 77; Moshavi 2010).

Van Hecke (2010, 107) rightly avers that the context for pragmatics involves not just “the immediate (narrative or discursive) textual context, but also includes the situation, physical context in which the communication takes place, and even the information which has not yet been referred to in the ongoing communication, but which is shared by the both interlocutors.” Speaking specifically on givenness, Floor (2004, 23) observes “Most theorists agree that... it is more than just activated by the preceding text leading up to it... cognitive and wider extra-textual assumptions and knowledge of the world determine how much of a topic is given.”

For our purposes, it needs to be remembered that “The interlocutors in written communication can either be a narrator and an audience or characters participating in a communicative event” (Khan and Van der Merwe 2020, 350).

(16) מִי־יֵרֵד אִתִּי אֶל־שָׂאוֹל אֶל־הַמַּחֲנֶה וַיֹּאמֶר אַבִּישי אֲנִי אֶרֶד עִמָּךְ:

“Who will go down with me to Saul, into the camp?”

Abishai said “I will go down with you.” (1 Sam. 26.6)

So in (16), for example, “the speaker assumes that the hearer presupposes that somebody will go down with him into the camp to Saul” (Khan and Van der Merwe 2020, 353).

The complexities of adducing the pragmatic relevance of the situational, physical, and yet-to-be revealed information in the Hebrew Bible are self-evident.<sup>23</sup> Nonetheless, I shall attempt to categorise information of predicate adjectives and stative verbs. In doing so, however, I make note of how tentative my various linguistic conjectures might be.

Before moving to the analysis section, we should be aware of just how close the relationship of adjectives and stative verbs is. Joüon and Muraoka (2006, 331), for example, claim that the *qaṭal* of stative verbs “is originally a ‘conjugated adjective’.” Concerning cross-linguistics, Cook (2008, 10) argues that “the stative adjective in Biblical Hebrew presents a split-strategy between verbal and nominal encodings,” as evidenced by what he calls verbal strategy (17), zero copula (18), and verbal copula (19).

(17) וַעֲיַיִן יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּבִדּוֹ מִזְקֵן

“The eyes of Israel were heavy from old age’ (Gen. 48.10)<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> As Moshavi (2010, 124) observes, “The mental representation incorporates inferences based on the reader’s knowledge and experience; thus information not explicitly referred to in the text may nonetheless constitute *activated information*” (emphasis mine).

<sup>24</sup> Translations for (16)–(18) are Cook’s (2008).

(18) וַיְדִי מִשָּׁה כְּבִדִּים

‘The hands of Moses (were) heavy’ (Exod. 17.12)

(19) וַיְהִי הַמַּחֲנֶה כְּבֵד מְאֹד

‘The camp was very great (lit. ‘heavy’)’ (Gen. 50.9)

To complicate matters further, some *qaṭal* and adjectival forms are identical (Pat-El 2013).

In general, adjectives “are highly complex and significantly less studied than other major lexical categories such as nouns or verbs” (McNally and Kennedy 2008, 1). Some of that difficulty is present in linguistic typology. Hofherr (2010, 1), for instance, notes that “[i]dentifying nouns, verbs and adjectives cross-linguistically is... a difficult enterprise, with *adjectives being particularly elusive*.”<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, recent study by Naudé and Miller-Naudé (2016) demonstrates that the adjective in Biblical Hebrew is indeed a proper category and should not be indiscriminately lumped together with nouns in the broad category ‘substantives’.<sup>26</sup>

In certain contexts, prototypical statives may be either stative or dynamic (Comrie 1976).<sup>27</sup> This cross-linguistic tendency holds true for Biblical Hebrew. For example, by way of “narrative

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<sup>25</sup> Emphasis is mine. See also Dixon (2006); Wetzler (2013); Koller (2012).

<sup>26</sup> That said, there may be valid reasons for considering adjectives a subcategory of substantives (Hornkohl, personal communication). For the debate to be advanced, we would need to touch on typology, taxonomy, and more in the fields of linguistics and philosophy of language (particularly its history). Such discussion is beyond our purpose here.

<sup>27</sup> Rothmayr (2009).

sequence and the presence of punctiliar frames” a stative may become dynamic (Dobbs-Allsopp 2000, 50). Thus, stative verbs are similar and at times even identical to predicate adjectives, but the two are distinct.

In my study, I analyse the following predicate adjective and *qatal* pairs: חָכַם | חָכְמָה; זָקַן | זָקוּן; גָּדַל | גָּדוּל; קָטַן | קָטוּן. I have chosen these particular pairs because they feature prominently in Jenni’s research (1968; 1977; 1999; 2007; 2012).<sup>28</sup> I begin with חָכַם.

### 3.0. Analysis

#### 3.1. Predicate Adjective (חָכַם)

The predicate adjective (חָכַם) brings *new* information (NEW) in every case.<sup>29</sup>

(20) לְבַעֲבוֹר סִבַּב אֶת־פְּנֵי הַדָּבָר עָשָׂה עַבְדְּךָ יוֹאָב אֶת־הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה וְאִדְנִי חָכַם  
כְּחָכְמַת מַלְאָךְ הָאֱלֹהִים לְדַעַת אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר בָּאָרֶץ:

‘In order to change the course of affairs your servant Joab did this very thing. But my lord has wisdom like the wisdom of the angel of God to know all things that are on the earth.’

(2 Sam. 14.20)

<sup>28</sup> It should be noted I do not include in this study nominalised adjectives (e.g., Lam. 5.14), since these are not predicative adjectives/statives.

<sup>29</sup> Isa. 31.2; Jer. 4.22; 8.8; Ezek. 28.3 (notably with הִנֵּה); Hos. 14.10 (while textually *new*, it is here part of a rhetorical question); Ps. 107.43 (cf. Hos. 14.10); Prov. 26.16; 28.11.

In (20) the speaker gives a compliment to the king. Her statement gives a description that is textually *new*, but would also be news to the addressee (at least his knowledge of her perception).

### 3.2. Stative Verb (חָכַם)

For the stative verb (חָכַם) the pragmatics vary.

#### 3.2.1. GIV-ACT<sup>30</sup>

- (21) וַיְחַכֵּם מֶלֶךְ-הָאֲדָם מֵאֵיתָן הָאֲזָרְחִי וְהִימָן וְכַלְכַּל וְדַרְדָּע בְּנֵי מַחֹל  
 He was wiser than anyone else, wiser than Ethan the Ez-  
 rahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, children of Mahol (1  
 Kgs 5.11)

It is quite clear that (21) is *given* [GIV-ACT] because of the two previous verses: וַיִּתֵּן אֱלֹהִים חָכְמָה לְשֹׁלֹמֹה וַתְּבוֹנָה הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד וְרוּחַב לֵב כְּחֹל וַאֲשֶׁר עַל-שֵׁפֶת הַיָּם: וַתֵּרֶב חָכְמַת שְׁלֹמֹה מִחָכְמַת כָּל-בְּנֵי-יִקְדָּם וּמְכַל חָכְמַת מִצְרָיִם “God gave Solomon very great wisdom, discernment, and breadth of understanding as vast as the sand on the seashore, so that Solomon’s wisdom exceeded the wisdom of all the people of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt” (1 Kgs 5.9–10).

<sup>30</sup> Prov. 9.9 (the A line reads תֵּן לְחָכְמִים ‘give to the wise’, making the B line given [GIV-ACT], though the *yiqtol* [וַיְחַכֵּם] may well be inchoative); 9.12 (the second *qatal* is given [GIV-ACT]: אִם-חָכְמָתָּ חָכְמָתָּ לָּךְ ‘if you are wise, you are wise for yourself’); Prov. 20.1 (cf. 9.9).

### 3.2.2. ACC-SIT<sup>31</sup>

(22) וְאָמַרְתִּי אֲנִי בְלִבִּי כְּמִקְרָה הַכְּסִילִי גַם־אֲנִי יִקְרָנִי וְלָמָּה חֲכָמָתִי אֲנִי אֲזִי יוֹתֵר  
וְדַבַּרְתִּי בְלִבִּי שְׁגִס־זָה הַבָּל:

‘Then I said to myself, “What happens to the fool will happen to me also; why then have I been so very wise?” And I said to myself that this also is vanity.’ (Eccl. 2.15)

Qohelet understands well his past experience of being ‘very wise’ and thus the *qatal* cannot be *new* information. Since he is speaking to himself, it is reasonable to consider חֲכָמָתִי *situational* (ACC-SIT).

### 3.2.3. ACC-INF<sup>32</sup>

(23) לֵן הַיַּיִן הַמָּה שֹׁכֵר וְכֹל־שֹׁגֶה בּוֹ לֹא יִחְכֵּם:

‘Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.’ (Prov. 20.1)

<sup>31</sup> Prov. 23.15; Ecc. 2.15; 7.23. It seems appropriate to understand the imperative use of חָכֵם in Proverbs as situationally bound [ACC-SIT]: Prov. 6.6; 8.33; 13.20; 23.15; 23.19; 27.11. However, there are other possible categories for these imperatives.

<sup>32</sup> Deut. 32.29 (with לוֹ ‘if’); Job 32.9 (though the predicate moves the communication, the information still seems inferable from v. 8 וְנִשְׁמַתּוֹ ‘and the breath of the Almighty makes them discern’ [cf. Prince 1981]); Prov. 19.20 (the B line is inferable from the A: שָׁמַעַתְּ עֵצָה ‘Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom for the future’); Eccl. 7.23 (it seems possible to consider the B line as inferable from the A: כָּל־זֶה נִסִּיתִי בְּחָכְמָה ‘All this I have tested by wisdom’).

The *inference* (ACC-INF) comes from the A line, twice over. Two kinds of drinks are but a fool. Therefore, whoever consumes such drink would inevitably be a fool, or לֹא יִחְכַּם ‘not wise’.

### 3.2.4. NEW

There is one example of the stative verb that could perhaps be *new* information.

(24) וְגַם־חַמַּת תְּגַב־לִבָּהּ צֹר וְצִידוֹן כִּי חֲכָמָה מְאֹד:

‘Hamath also, which borders on it, Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.’ (Zech. 9.2)

In Zech. 9 the information that Tyre and Sidon are ‘very wise’ is certainly textually *new*. However, it may be better to understand the stative verb in (24) as *accessible* [ACC-GEN], considering Tyre’s reputation was possibly part of general knowledge of the world (cf. Isa. 23.8; Ezek. 26.15–17; 27.3).

### 3.3. Predicate Adjective (זָקֵן)

All unambiguous instances of the predicate adjective זָקֵן bring *new* information (NEW)—as Jenni claims.<sup>33</sup>

(25) וְאַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה זָקְנִים בָּאִים בְּיָמִים חָדָל לְהַיּוֹת לְשָׂרָה אַרְחַ בְּנָשִׁים:

‘Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.’ (Gen. 18.11)

This comment by the narrator in (25) provides *new* information for the reader that proves important for the remainder of the

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<sup>33</sup> Cf. also Job 32.4.

larger narrative (Gen. 12–22). We should keep in mind, however, that the syntactic structure of *waw* + subject + predicate in the midst of a *wayyiqtol* chain could itself be the device for signalling *new* information, irrespective of whether the predicate is an adjective or not (cf. Moshavi 2010, 14).<sup>34</sup>

### 3.4. Stative Verb (זָקַן)

#### 3.4.1. GIV-ACT<sup>35</sup>

(26) וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָהָם לָמָּה זֶה צָחֲקָה שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר הֲאֵף אֲמַנָּם אֵלֶּךְ וְאֲנִי זָקַנְתִּי:

‘The LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’” (Gen. 18.13)

The stative verb זָקַנְתִּי contains information that not only is known, but has been stated explicitly in v. 11 (cf. [25] above). Though, as Hornkohl (personal communication) observes, the information is *given*, it is embedded in direct speech. Therefore, it is not necessarily *given* from the perspective of the characters. Like our analysis above, Holmstedt (2009, 132) toggles between discourse and narrative. In Ruth 3.17, for example, he considers the fronted object (שֵׁשֶׁ־הֶשְׁעָרִים ‘six measures of barley’) *given* information, though the characters themselves have not yet shared

<sup>34</sup> In addition, we might consider (25) athetic sentence in which a “unitary situation (“The situation was...”) is expressed (Khan and Van der Merwe 2020, 358).

<sup>35</sup> Josh. 13.1b; 23.2; 1 Sam. 8.5.

that information with each other. The audience, however, is already privy to such information via the narrator. In such a case, we should recall that the study of IS involves that “management of the common ground,” which for the Hebrew Bible would mean that the interlocutors “can either be a narrator and an audience or characters participating in a communicative” (Khan and Van der Merwe 2020, 350).

(27) וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה־נָא זָקֵנְתִּי

‘He said, “See, I am old.”’ (Gen. 27.2)

As in (26), the stative verb in (27) refers back to the information *given* (GIV-ACT) in the previous verse: וַיְהִי כִּי־זָקֵן יִצְחָק ‘when Isaac was old’ (Gen. 27.1).

### 3.4.2. GIV-INACT

(28) וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו הִנֵּה אַתָּה זָקֵנָה

‘and said to him, “You are old.”’ (1 Sam. 8.5)

Here, the verb זָקֵנָה harks back to the narrator’s statement that זָקֵן שְׁמוּאֵל ‘Samuel was old’ (1 Sam. 8.1).<sup>36</sup>

(29) וְאֲנִי זָקֵנְתִּי וְשִׁבְתִּי וּבְנֵי הַגָּם אִתְּכֶם וְאֲנִי הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי לְפָנֶיכֶם מִנְעֹרֵי עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה:

‘I am old and grey, but my sons are with you. I have walked before you from my youth until this day.’ (1 Sam. 12.2)

<sup>36</sup> While 1 Sam. 8.1 is admittedly ambiguous as to whether it is a stative verb or predicate adjective, the pragmatic analysis of (28) still holds. For further discussion of the grammatically opaque cases, such as 1 Sam. 8.1, see §3.5 (especially §3.5.2).

זָקַנְתִּי in (29) is a restatement of the explicit descriptions of Samuel's age in 1 Sam. 8.1 (זָקַן שְׁמוּאֵל 'Samuel was old') and 8.5 (אַתָּה זָקַנְתָּ 'you are old').

### 3.4.3. ACC-INF<sup>37</sup>

(30) שָׁבְנָה בְּנֹתַי לְכֹן כִּי זָקַנְתִּי מִהַיּוֹת לְאִישׁ  
 'Turn back, my daughters, go, for I am too old to have a husband.' (Ruth 1.12)

The previous verse (Ruth 1.11) lays the premise that Naomi is past child-bearing years: הֲעוֹד־לִי בָּנִים בְּמִעִי וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְאֻנָּשִׁים: 'Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands?' Thus, זָקַנְתִּי in (30) is an *inference* [ACC-INF]—though rhetorically, the repetition is important for Naomi's argument.

### 3.4.4. NEW

(31) וַיִּזְקַן יְהוֹיָדָע וַיִּשְׁבַּע יָמָיו וַיָּמָת  
 But Jehoiada grew old and full of days, and died. (2 Chron. 24.15)

Though problematic for Jenni's comprehensive claim for the stative verb bringing *given* information, the *wayyiqtol* does not seem to be *given* or *accessible*. Therefore, (31) should be considered *new* information.

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<sup>37</sup> Ps. 37.25 (if זָקַנְתִּי is present stative 'am old' or inchoative 'am becoming old' [i.e., not preterite 'became old' or past perfective 'have become old'], then it is an inference from the past time *qatal* הָיִיתִי in the previous clause: נָעַר הָיִיתִי 'I was a boy'; the *focus* particle prior to our stative verb זָקַנְתִּי marks contrast, even if that contrast is inferable).

### 3.5. Predicate Adjective or Stative Verb (זָקֵן)?

The form זָקֵן is ambiguous. It can be construed as a ms predicate adjective or as a 3ms stative verb. As such, I do not make a decision on the grammar of the form, but categorise the pragmatics of each occurrence.

#### 3.5.1. GIV-ACT

- (32) וַתִּצְחַק שָׂרָה בְּקִרְבָּהּ לֵאמֹר אַחֲרַי בְּלִתִּי הֲיִתְהַלְּלִי עַדְנָה וְאֵדְנִי זָקֵן:  
 ‘So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?”’ (Gen. 18.12)

זָקֵן gives us information that is known in the verse prior: וְאַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה זָקֵנִים ‘Now Abraham and Sarah were old’ (Gen. 18.11).

#### 3.5.2. GIV-INACT<sup>38</sup>

- (33) וַתָּבֹא בַת-שֶׁבַע אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ הַחֲדָרָה וְהַמֶּלֶךְ זָקֵן מְאֹד וְאַבִּישָׁג הַשֻּׁנַמִּית מְשֻׁרְתָּת אֶת-הַמֶּלֶךְ:  
 ‘So Bathsheba went to the king in his room. The king was very old; Abishag the Shunammite was attending the king.’  
 (1 Kgs 1.15)

It is unlikely that זָקֵן marks *new* information, because the book of Kings begins by stating וְהַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד זָקֵן ‘Now the king, David, was old’ (1 Kgs 1.1). Jenni (1977, 68), however, argues that (33) is “*parenthetischer Umstandssatz, der zur Begründung der Zurückgezogenheit des Königs die Information von v. 1 wiederholt, ohne*

<sup>38</sup> Josh. 23.1; 1 Sam. 4.18; 8.1.

darauf als etwas Bekanntes zurückzugreifen.” This analysis appears incorrect, as both vv. 1 and 15 are descriptions of David by the narrator.

(34) וְאֲבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים וַיְהִי בָרֶךְ אֶת־אֲבְרָהָם בְּכֹל:

‘Now Abraham was old, well advanced in years; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.’ (Gen. 24.1)

Based on Gen. 18.11–13 (cf. examples (25) and (32), above), זָקֵן in (34) is best understood as *given* information (GIV-INACT). Jenni, on the other hand, calls (34) “neueinsetzende Exposition” and thus understands the predicate to denote *new* information (1977, 68). Abraham’s age in (34) is already part of the common ground between the narrator and audience, however. The narrator’s repetition of זָקֵן here has to do with its relevance for the episode.<sup>39</sup>

### 3.5.3. ACC-GEN

(35) וַתֹּאמֶר הַבְּכִיָּרָה אֶל־הַצְעִירָה אַבְיָנוּ זָקֵן וְאִישׁ אֵין בָּאָרֶץ לָבוֹא עָלֵינוּ בְּדָרֶךְ:  
כָּל־הָאָרֶץ:

‘And the firstborn said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is not a man on earth to come in to us after the manner of all the world.”’ (Gen. 19.31)

The older sister describes Lot as old—a fact well-known to both sisters [ACC-GEN]. This information is used to issue a directive in v. 32: לָכֵּה נִשְׁקָה אֶת־אַבְיָנוּ יָיִן וְנִשְׁכְּבָה עִמּוֹ ‘Come, let’s make our father drink wine and we will lie with him.’

<sup>39</sup> I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for pointing this out more clearly.

### 3.5.4. NEW<sup>40</sup>

(36) וְהַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד זָקֵן בָּא בַיָּמָיִם וַיִּכְסֶהוּ בַבְּגָדִים וְלֹא יָחַם לוֹ:

The king David was old and advanced in years. They covered him with clothes, but he could not get warm. (1 Kgs 1.1)

Introducing the narrative, זָקֵן is *new* information.

### 3.6. Predicate Adjective קִטְוֹן

The only clear use of the predicate adjective is *accessible* [ACC-SIT].

(37) וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל הֲלוֹא אִם-קִטְוֹן אַתָּה בְּעֵינֶיךָ רֹאשׁ שְׁבֵטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אַתָּה וַיִּמְשַׁחֶךָ  
יְהוָה לְמֶלֶךְ עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל:

‘Samuel said, “Though you are small in your own eyes, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel? Yhwh anointed you king over Israel.”’ (1 Sam. 15.17)

### 3.7. Stative Verb קִטְוֹן

For the stative verb there is no *given* information proper (GIV-ACT or GIV-INACT).

#### 3.7.1. ACC-SIT

(38) וַתִּקְטָן עוֹד זֹאת בְּעֵינֶיךָ אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה וַתְּדַבֵּר גַּם אֶל-בֵּית-עַבְדְּךָ לְמַרְחֹק

‘And this was a small thing in your eyes, O Lord Yhwh; you have spoken also of your servant’s house for a great while to come.’ (2 Sam. 7.19 || 1 Chron. 17.17)

<sup>40</sup> Gen. 27.1; Josh. 13.1a; 1 Sam. 2.22; 17.12; 2 Sam. 19.33; 2 Kgs 4.14.

David presents nothing *new* in the first clause of (38). Rather, his statement is *situational* [ACC-SIT] (cf. Prince 1981, 230–31).<sup>41</sup>

### 3.7.2. NEW

(39) קִטְנָתִי מִכָּל הַחֲסִדִים וּמִכָּל-הָאֱמֻת

‘I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness.’ (Gen. 32.11)

Since there is no clear information that is *given* or *accessible* in the surrounding context of (39), the verb קִטְנָתִי would seem to express *new* information. Jacob appears to use קִטְנָתִי along with עַבְדְּךָ ‘your servant’ for purposes of deference. This politeness strategy lays the foundation for the request הַצִּילֵנִי נָא ‘please deliver me’ (Gen. 32.12; cf. Bridge 2019, 576–77). We should note that (39) poses a rather significant problem for the argument that stative verbs *always* bring *given* information.

## 3.8. Predicate Adjective גָּדוֹל

Unlike the predicate adjectives זָקֵן and קָטָן, גָּדוֹל does *not* present *new* information exclusively.

### 3.8.1. ACC-GEN<sup>42</sup>

(40) כִּי גָדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד וְנוֹרָא הוּא עַל-כָּל-אֱלֹהִים:

‘For great is Yhwh, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.’ (1 Chron. 16.25)

<sup>41</sup> The possibility of inference or general [ACC] categories here should not be dismissed, however. In any case, the stative verb does not convey *given* information.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. 2 Chron. 2.4b.

Based on the description of Götze et al. (2007), גָּדוֹל in (40) would seem to be generalised information in which the speaker and addressee readily understand the predicate as something as obvious from general world knowledge (e.g., the setting of the sun).

### 3.8.2. NEW<sup>43</sup>

(41) וַיֹּאמֶר קַיִן אֶל־יְהוָה גָּדוֹל עוֹנִי מִנְשָׂא:

‘Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is greater than I can bear!”’ (Gen. 4.13)

גָּדוֹל in (41) is fronted. In particular, the predicate adjective is focused. It is not surprising that the fronted, focused predicate adjective also relates *new* information. Nevertheless, we should not conflate *focus* with *new* information (Moshavi 2010). Nor should word order be seen as corresponding directly to the status of information (Gross 2001).

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<sup>43</sup> Gen. 39.9 (with comparative מֵן); Exod. 18.11 (with comparative מֵן); Deut. 1.28 (with comparative מֵן); 9.1 (with comparative מֵן); 11.23 (with comparative מֵן, cf. Holmstedt [2016, 306–7] for analysis of zero-relatives); Josh. 10.2; Judg. 5.16 (though possibly *accessible* [ACC], לְפָלְגוֹת רְאוּבֵן גָּדוֹלִים חַקְרֵי־לֵב ‘Among the clans of Reuben the searchings of heart were great’ may best be understood as part of the general knowledge of the speaker and addressee); 2 Sam. 13.15; Ps. 135.5 (the psalmist seems to raise the CG so that the addressees will know [יִדְעֵתִי] that Yhwh is great); 2 Chron. 2.4a.

### 3.9. Stative Verb (גָּדַל)

#### 3.9.1. GIV-ACT

(42) וַיְהִי בַיָּמִים הָהֵם וַיִּגְדַּל מֹשֶׁה וַיֵּצֵא אֶל-אֶחָיו וַיֵּרָא בְּסִבְלָתָם וַיֵּרָא אִישׁ מִצְרִי מַכֶּה אִישׁ-עִבְרִי מֵאֶחָיו:

‘One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and saw their forced labour. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his kinsfolk.’ (Exod. 2.11)

The *wayyiqtol* in (42) refers back to וַיִּגְדַּל הַיָּלֵד ‘when the child grew up’ in v. 10.

#### 3.9.2. GIV-INACT<sup>44</sup>

(43) וַיִּגְדַּל שְׁמוּאֵל וַיְהִי הָיָה עִמּוֹ וְלֹא-הִפִּיל מִכָּל-דְּבָרָיו אֶרְצָה:

‘As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground.’ (1 Sam. 3.19)

Earlier in the narrative, Samuel was growing up: וַהֲגַעַר שְׁמוּאֵל הַלֵּךְ ‘and the boy Samuel continued growing in stature and favour’ (1 Sam. 2.26). Thus, the information in (43) is *given* (GIV-INACT).<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Cf. also 1 Kgs 12.10 || 2 Chron. 10.10.

<sup>45</sup> Though children growing up is categorised as *accessible* [ACC-GEN] elsewhere, (41) is *given* [GIV-INACT], because its information was stipulated explicitly earlier in the narrative.

3.9.3. ACC-INF<sup>46</sup>

(44) עַל־כֵּן גְּדֹלַת אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה כִּי־אֵין כְּמוֹד וְאֵין אֱלֹהִים זֹלָתָךְ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־שָׁמַעְנוּ  
בְּאָזְנוֹ:

‘Therefore you are great, O Yhwh God; for there is no one like you, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears.’ (2 Sam. 7.22)

The previous verse (2 Sam. 7.21) does not give the exact information as (44) per se, but the inference is not difficult to discern: בְּעִבּוּר דְּבָרְךָ וְכִלְבֻּבְךָ עָשִׂיתָ אֶת כָּל־הַגְּדוּלָה הַזֹּאת לְהוֹדִיעַ אֶת־עֲבָדְךָ ‘because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have wrought all this greatness, so that your servant may know it.’ Of course, the inference is made clearer because of עַל־כֵּן ‘therefore’ (cf. Van der Merwe et al. 2017, 450–51).

<sup>46</sup> Gen. 24.35 (inference coming from the previous verb בָּרַךְ ‘[and Yhwh] blessed’); 26.13; 1 Sam. 26.24a; 2 Sam. 7.22, 26 || 1 Chron. 17.24; 1 Kgs 10.23 || 2 Chron. 9.22; Zech. 12.7 (the first clause וְהוֹשִׁיעַ יְהוָה אֶת־אֶהְלֵי יְהוּדָה בְּרִאשֹׁנָה ‘Yhwh will deliver the tents of Judah first’ allows לֹא־תִגְדֹּל ‘will not surpass’ to be an inference; moreover, the negated *yiqtol* suggests that the *yiqtol* itself was already presupposed); Mal. 1.5; Ps. 92.6 (inference from previous verse כִּי שָׂמַחַתְנִי יְהוָה בְּפַעֲלֶךָ בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ אֲרַנֵּן ‘for you Yhwh have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy’); Job 2.13; Lam. 4.6; Ezra 9.6 (the *qatal* clause ‘our guilt is great/high (גְּדֹלָה) as the heavens’ is inferable from the previous clause: עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ רָבוּ לְמַעַל רֹאשׁ ‘our iniquities have risen above our head’).

3.9.4. ACC-GEN<sup>47</sup>

- (45) וַתֵּלֶד אֶשֶׁת־גִּלְעָד לֹן בָּנִים וַיִּגְדְּלוּ בְנֵי־הָאִשָּׁה וַיִּגְרְשׁוּ אֶת־יִפְתָּח וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ לֹא־  
 תִּנְחַל בְּבֵית־אֲבִינוּ כִּי בְּאִשָּׁה אַחֲרַת אָתָּה:  
 ‘Gilead’s wife also bore him sons; and when his wife’s sons  
grew up, they drove Jephthah away, saying to him, “You  
 shall not inherit anything in our father’s house; for you are  
 the son of another woman.”’ (Judg. 11.2)

Though וַיִּגְדְּלוּ is *new* textually, I find the *wayyiqtol* in (45) to be generalised, as this is simply the process of human life, similar to the sun setting (Götze et al. 2007).

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<sup>47</sup> Because several occurrences are inchoative ‘become great’ or ‘grow’, we could understand the information as *new*. However, the majority has to do with children growing up. This is, of course, expected from general knowledge of the world: Gen. 21.8, 20; 25.27; 38.11, 14; Exod. 2.10; Judg. 13.24; 1 Sam. 2.21; 2 Kgs 4.18; Ezek. 16.7; Ruth 1.13. A similar assessment of horns in Daniel appears; they ‘grow’—as horns do: Dan. 8.9, 10. At least one has to do with prominence (of the first-born): Gen. 48.19a. However, there are a few texts which speak to Yhwh’s greatness. In such cases, it appears that CG is shared in a general knowledge that Yhwh is גָּדֹל: Ps. 35.27; 40.17; 70.5; 104.1.

3.9.5. NEW<sup>48</sup>

- (46) וְאוֹלָם אֶחָיו הַקָּטָן יִגְדֹל מִמֶּנּוּ וְזָרְעוֹ יִהְיֶה מִלֵּאֵהֲגוֹיִם:  
 ‘Nevertheless, his younger brother shall be greater than he,  
 and his offspring shall become a multitude of nations.’  
 (Gen. 48.19)

Contra Jenni’s expectations of pragmatic information, I do not see any basis for the categories of *given* or *accessible* in (46). In the biblical narrative it is much to Joseph’s chagrin that the *new* information is that the younger brother will be greater than the older. His stated expectation was for the first-born: וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־: ‘Joseph said to his father, “Not so, my father! Since this one is the firstborn, put your right hand on his head”’ (Gen. 48.18).

## 4.0. Conclusions

My study allows for several conclusions—some certain and others tentative. First, Jenni is often correct that predicate adjectives denote *new* information, while stative verbs bring *given* information. However, that is not always the case. A stative verb at times denotes *new* information (§§3.2.4; 3.4.4; 3.7.2; 3.9.5), and predicate adjectives do not always indicate *new* information (§§3.6; 3.8.1). Second, the analysis of IS using three categories (*given*, *accessible*, *new*) provides clarity and specificity in a way

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<sup>48</sup> Num. 14.17; 1 Sam. 26.24b; 1 Kgs 12.8 || 2 Chron. 10.8; Mic. 5.3 (*new* textually and it seems that the scope of greatness was not common ground: כִּי־עַתָּה יִגְדֹל עַד־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ ‘for now he will be great to the ends of the earth’); Zech. 12.11.

that the typical *given-new* dichotomy does not. Third, examination of the first layer of pragmatics (*theme/rheme* as some call it) should be a more prominent and explicit part of pragmatic research on Biblical Hebrew, even if the layer is more banal than the second layer (*topic/focus*). Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, more work is needed on the intersection of grammar and pragmatics in Biblical Hebrew.

The above research demonstrates that Jenni's study is ultimately unsuccessful. That is not to say, however, that his supposition of grammar marking pragmatics is fallacious. As pragmatics gains more attention from Hebraists, study of the relationship of grammar and pragmatics will hopefully follow. It is my hope that this article may help, at least in some small way, to advance the conversation on how grammar and pragmatics relate to one another.

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