Why Study Syntax?

- **Syntax:**
  - How words work together to communicate meaning in clauses.
- **Why study it?**
  - What meaning is legitimate to take from this verse?
    - Evaluate differences in translation.
    - Evaluate arguments in commentaries.
  - BibleWorks and Accordance can’t tell you.
- **Take intermediate Hebrew!**
  - This is where the payoff comes in learning Hebrew.

Clause vs. Sentence

- A clause has a subject and a predicate.
  1. “I ran home.”
  2. “She is here.”
  3. “He will read a book.”
- A sentence can be a single clause (examples 1-3).
- A sentence can have more than one clause:
  4. “After she woke up, she read her Bible and prayed before she went downstairs for breakfast.”
Chapter 23 Lecture Roadmap

- Why study syntax?
- Clause vs. Sentence
- Starting with י
  - Verbless clauses
  - Verbal clause word order
  - Verb sequences

Many clauses start with י ‘and’

- “Clause initial” = the first word in the clause.
- Often should NOT translate clause-initial י as ‘and’.
- Translation of clause-initial י depends on the context.
  - [Nothing], and, then, but, so, if, ...

Two Main Categories of Clause-Initial י

- Clause begins with י + verb
  - ‘Conjunctive waw’ and ‘Consecutive Waw’
  - Continues (in some sense) what came before it.
    - The next action or logically connected
  - Clause begins with י + non-verb
    - ‘Disjunctive waw’
    - Does NOT continue what came before it.

Clause-Initial י + Verb

- Iwc and Pwc
  - ‘Consecutive waw’
  - The next event in the narrative.
    - Typically means ‘and then’
    - E.g., “She turned off the light, and then she got into bed, and then she went to sleep.”
  - י + other verbs
    - ‘Conjunctive waw’
    - Not necessarily the next event in a narrative.
    - Often means ‘and’
Clause-Initial ו + Non-Verb

- "Disjunctive Waw"
- NOT just continuing what came before it.
- Some kind of a break.
  - Parenthetical remark / background information
  - Contrast
    - "You did this, but she did that."
  - Starts a new topic.
    - "Now the serpent was more crafty ..."
  - Other possibilities.

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A Verbless Clause Lacks a Finite Verb

- Finite Verb
  - A verb that has ‘person’ (1st, 2nd, or 3rd)
  - Perfect, Imperfect, Iwc, Imperative, etc

- Infinitives and participles are NOT finite verbs
  - They do not have ‘person’.

And Abel also brought from the first-born of his flock and from their fat portions. And YHWH looked (favorably) on Abel and on his gift. But on Cain and on his gift, he did not look (favorably).

- ‘and’ #2, 4, 6 do not introduce clauses.
- ‘and’ #3 is on an Iwc verb, so it is the next action.
- ‘and’ #1, 5 are on non-verbs, so they are not simply the next action. They introduces switches from Cain to Abel (or vice versa), and #5 contrasts them sharply.
Verbless Clauses Are Usually Present Time

- Verbless clauses are usually present time
  - ‘he is good’

- in the perfect indicates past time
  - ‘he was good’

- in the imperfect indicates future time
  - ‘he will be good’

Verbless Clauses Usually Identify or Classify

- Identify
  - ‘I am the God of your father’

- Classify
  - ‘he is good’

In poetry, a verb is often omitted and must be inferred from context.
- E.g., “The Torah will come from Zion, and the word of YHWH [will come] from Jerusalem”

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“Verb first” – Usually

- A finite verb with י always begins a new clause.
  - Pwc
  - Iwc
  - Perfect + conjunctive waw
  - Imperfect + conjunctive waw
    - Usually parse as cohortative or jussive

- Jussive and Cohortative usually begin a new clause.
  - Occasionally not the first word in the clause
Verb not always first

- Imperfect usually not first word in a clause.
  - If first, it is probably jussive or cohortative.
- Perfect usually not first word in a clause.
- If a verb is negated, the negative precedes the verb.
- Many things can precede a verb in a clause
  - E.g., subject, object, prepositional phrase, etc.
  - Pay attention to anything that precedes the verb in a clause.
  - ask why it precedes the verb.

Verb Sequences

- Imperative, then Pwc
  - The Pwc is the next command in the series.
  - 'Go and say to my servant’

- Imperative/Jussive/Cohortative
  then waw with Imperfect
  - Parse the imperfect with waw as cohortative or jussive because it is first in its clause.
  - The imperfect with waw is usually the purpose or result of the preceding verb.
  - ‘buy grain so that we will live’