

INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL HEBREW
Fall semester 2010

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Class assistants: Megan Case

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Course Description

In this course we will learn the elements of biblical Hebrew on the basis of the grammar called *Biblical Hebrew, Text and Workbook*, originally devised by Bonnie Pedrotti Kittel and edited by Victoria Hoffer and Rebecca Abts Wright [see below], the exercises provided by the grammar and some of those in the Supplement. In addition, there are CD's to help with acquaintance with the alphabet, pronunciation, etc. The study of language is always time-consuming and students need to manage their time carefully so they achieve a balance between Hebrew and their other classes. Memorization is a key part of learning any language and this is no less so for Hebrew. Hebrew is not so much a difficult language as one that is strange to Western perceptions because of the difference in alphabet as well as direction of reading. Daily reading practice will do much to alleviate the perceived strangeness of Hebrew.

Required texts:

**Biblical Hebrew, Text and Workbook, Bonnie Pedrotti Kittel, Victoria Hoffer and Rebecca Abts Wright – Second Edition fully revised by Victoria Hoffer.
CD's and Supplement.**

During the last stage of the course you will need to acquire a Hebrew Bible (BIBLIA HEBRAICA STUTTGARTENSIA) and a Lexicon (THE HEBREW AND ARAMAIC LEXICON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT Study Edition, by Koehler and Baumgartner. Leiden: Brill, 2001.)

**English Bibles: The Harper Collins Study Bible (or The Oxford Annotated Bible)
The Jewish Study Bible (These two Bibles will also be used in the Scripture I course)**

Course Objectives

The main objective of the course is to gain sufficient knowledge of biblical Hebrew to be able to read biblical texts in Hebrew with some facility and translate them with the help of a lexicon. Hebrew vocabulary is very easily forgotten and some regular practice of memorizing vocabulary will help to minimize time spent looking up words in the lexicon. Introductory Hebrew is followed by Hebrew Exegesis, which affords the opportunity to improve reading and translating skills at a steady rate. In addition, a course in reading and translating biblical Hebrew is offered each semester.

Method

The class will meet in groups on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00 – 11:20.. For purposes of discussing homework and processing questions, the class will be subdivided on a regular basis to do work in groups, with the aid of the class-assistants, who will help monitor the homework. In addition, class assistants have set time aside during which they are available for questions and rehearsal of homework or preparation for tests. These times will be announced at the beginning of classes. There will be regular in-class written tests during the course, a mid-term test and a final. Because the ground we need to cover is set out for us and there is always too little time to study the language adequately, we will keep questions to a minimum during lecture time. Questions that are considered non-essential, as concerning finer points of pronunciation and letter shapes, should be taken up with instructor or class assistants outside of class.

Requirements

- 1 . In preparation for this course, all students are expected to have worked through the first sections in Grammar book and Supplement dealing with the Hebrew Alphabet (pp.3-11 in Grammar and 3-7 in Supplement) and to have listened to and memorized the alphabet through CD 1, including the vowels.
2. Homework to be checked during class, sometimes in small groups. Written homework to be handed in and graded.
3. Written tests, roughly every other week. Some of the tests will emphasize vocabulary, others will be oriented toward grammar and translation. Since the course is not designed to prepare you to speak the Hebrew language, translations will be from Hebrew to English and not vice versa.
4. There will be one mid-term examination, immediately following Research and Study week and a final test during exam days in December.
5. Students are expected to attend all class-sessions. Excuses must be cleared with the instructor ahead of time. All homework and other assignments need to be completed on time.

Evaluation

The class will be taught on a pass-fail basis. Requests for a letter grade may be made to the instructor no later than Oct.5, 2010.

Policy on Inclusive Language:

In speech and in written assignments, it is the policy of the school to avoid divisive terms that reinforce stereotypes or are pejorative. We do not use language that leaves out part of the population, perpetuates stereotyping, or diminishes importance. Do not use male pronouns (such as “men”) to refer to a group that includes females as well. Consult the Academic Support Center for additional guidance if necessary. See:

http://www.lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp.

Academic Honesty

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Students unfamiliar with issues relating to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center and should make use of the available resources at an early date, since violations of seminary policy on academic honesty can lead to a failing grade for the course.

Internet and Cell Phones

The use of laptop computers during class is discouraged. Cell phones are to be turned off. Exceptions may be requested from the instructor.

COMMENTS

- Before you know it, you will be dealing with fairly complex grammatical rules. You should take great care **not to fall behind** in this class for it will be almost impossible to catch up. Try to relax and keep studying, especially vocabulary and reading. Even if things don't make sense at first, they will most likely do so at second and third consideration. Studying too long at one time may be counterproductive. Find a method that works for you. Blocks of half-hour periods of studying with a break may work better than hours of uninterrupted concentration. Be sensitive to your brain. If it feels that it has stopped taking things in, give yourself a break, and return to the work later. If your brain stops working in the middle of class, try to keep listening, in spite of your frustration. Keep your attention as much as possible on the presentations; this is not the sort of class in which you can afford to tune the teacher out. Save your questions for the periods provided by the instructor and small group sessions.
- We will begin at a fairly slow pace with one lesson per class session. When possible we will pick up more than one lesson at a time.
- Vocabulary is always included in assignments and will therefore not be separately listed.
- Oral reviews are also included and we will practice these in full session as much as possible.
- If you still need work on the alphabet, recognizing the letters, writing and naming them, by the end of the first class, use tutorial sessions for help.
- If the quantity of assignments seems overwhelming, remember that exercises are often repetitions of the same grammatical rule.
- **THE SECRET OF LEARNING HEBREW: MEMORIZE, MEMORIZE, MEMORIZE.**

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Anticipations:

- *You will probably feel that there is too much new vocabulary to memorize and that it's all too much, too much. Without a basic vocabulary there is not much one can do with a language, however, so word memorization will be a part of the course. Whether this comes easy to you or not, it will at times feel uninteresting theologically and even plain dumb. It is one of those tasks that has to be done. It may help to call to mind that all we do, also and perhaps especially the memorization of Hebrew vocabulary, we do "ad maiorem Dei gloriam," that is to say "for the greater glory of God."*
- *Your instructors cannot always read your minds, so let them know when you think you are being stretched to an unreasonable degree. Although in language instruction there is a certain amount of material that must be dealt with, we will try to be as flexible as possible about the schedule. I have provided a schedule for the first month of class only, so we can make adjustments as we go along.*

CLASS SCHEDULE

Before classes begin know your alphabet and vowel sounds.

Page numbers refer to pages in the grammar. When the Supplement is referred to page numbers will be preceded by an S

September: Thursday Sept. 9: Pp.3-10 Getting acquainted with each other and Hebrew reading and writing.

Assignment: Practice writing **Block** writing of the Hebrew Alphabet on pp.12 and 13. [*This exercise will not be corrected. If you have questions about writing the letters, process them in small group. Writing the letters correctly will greatly facilitate reading.*] Practice reading exercise on p.11. [The reading exercise will be gone over in small group as far as time allows]

Read the handout on the name of God written by Johanna

P.21: B: Memorize particles and first ten words on pp. 387-389. Memorize words in boldface only! See appropriate sound tracks on CD's on p. 21; listening to these will be very helpful.

Tuesday Sept. 14 : 10-11 Presentation of material in lesson 1; dagesh; verbal roots; vav converse; parsing verbs.

11-11:20 Reading exercise (p.11) in small groups.

Assignment for Sept.16: Repeat assignments on p.21 if you were not quite done.

P.21: C and E (soundtracks); CD 1: lesson sentences for 1 and 2.

Thursday Sept. 16 Lesson 2: verbal roots and stem changes. Identifying elements of the sentence; masculine singular suffix.

Assignment for Tuesday Sept.21: P.24, A, and C **Emphasize vocabulary** on pp.389-390. Remember that you need to memorize only the words in boldface! B is highly recommended for picking up skills in reading and pronunciation.

Translate text on p.25. These phrases are all taken from Scripture. Try to puzzle out the sentence on your own and only consult a translation as a last resort. Even then, you must be able to analyze the sentence, parse construction and verbs.

Tuesday Sept.21: 10-11: Presentation of Lesson 3: missing verb root letters. Another kind of dagesh. Particles and fusion. 11-11:20: exercise C, p.25 in small groups.

Assignment for Thursday Sept.23: Vocabulary, words 1-30, pp.387-390

Thursday Sept.23: 10:00 – 11:00: Presentation of lesson 4: Old stuff, definite article and segolates. 11:00-11:20: **short vocabulary quiz** [words 1-30].

Assignment for Tuesday Sept.28: P.32: B and D. Review and drill on p.33, parts I and II.

Homework to be handed in, p. 33, part II sentences 7-12.

Tuesday Sept.28: *Hand in written homework*. 10-11: Lesson 5: The construct chain; definite and indefinite; the verb “to be.” 11:00-11:20: P.32 D and P.33, part II, sentences 1-6.

Assignment for Thursday Sept.30: P. 38 A and C.

Thursday Sept. 30 Lesson 6 and 7: Prefix complement; qamats hatuf; construct and absolute; noun plurals; verbs that begin with “nun;” the preposition “le.”

Assignment for Tuesday Oct.3: P.43: C and D. Concentrate on vocabulary, try to achieve words 1-60. P.47: C. Consult Supplement lessons 5 and 6; listen to CD’s if extra time.

Tuesday Oct. 5: 10:00-11:00: Lesson 8: Vav reversive; shortening of nouns. 11:00: **Short translation quiz.**

Assignment for Thursday Oct.5: p.52:D

Thursday Oct.7: Lessons 9 and 10: personal pronouns; participles; lack of quotation marks in Hebrew; qamats hatuf (S 32).

Assignment for Tuesday Oct. 12: P.56: D, E; p.58/59: C. *Keep memorizing vocabulary!*

Tuesday Oct. 12: Lessons 11 and 12: Hebrew infinitives; possessive endings.

Assignment for Thursday Oct.14: P.63/64: C 1, 4, 5; P.67: D 2, 4, 7, 9

Thursday Oct.14: *Review and Drill on pp.68-74.*

Research and Study week:

Assignments for this week: Review lessons 1-12 [using the supplement for this review will be helpful; focus on pp. 12, 14, 16, 20, 21; 22; 24, 25; 27, 28; 33; 35/36 sections marked ? for practice. Cover up the answers provided at the bottom of the page for maximum usefulness.]; memorize first 110 words. P.60 Review and Drill, I and II; p.69, VI; p.73/4 parsing and translation exercises.

Tuesday Oct.26: *Mid-term test on lessons 1-12 in grammar.*

No assignment

Thursday Oct.28: Lessons 13 and 14: Paradigm of Hebrew strong verb; variations when verb contains gutturals; prefix verb forms without vav conversive; attributive adjectives; infinitive of “asah”; the attributive adjective.

Assignments for Tuesday Nov.2 pp.78 and 84: A (adding to your vocabulary); B (paradigms of Qal verbs); p.78 E) 1-5; p.84 D) 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

Homework to be handed in on Tuesday Nov.2: *Translate the exercise marked "lessons 13-14" on p.123. For each verb construct a box analyzing the verb according to the custom of the grammar.*

Tuesday Nov.2: Lessons 15 and 16: The predicate adjective; Pi'el affix for regular and guttural verbs, Pi'el prefix. Pi'el meanings. Verbs with a ה as third root consonant, verbs with a ח as first root consonant. Translating of the E) exercises in small group or full session.

Assignments for Thursday Nov.4: pp.90 and 97: A. P.91 E) 1-7; p.97 E) 3-5.

Thursday Nov.4: Lessons 17 and 18: Verbs beginning with a ו ; stative verbs; imperatives; use of adjectives. Translation of E) exercises in full session or small groups.

Assignments for Tuesday Nov. 9: VOCABULARY WORDS 1-140. P.107 Identify adjectives in Hebrew sentences top of page and translate; P.107 D)

Tuesday Nov.9: Lessons 19 and 20: verbs and little words. Loss of roots in imperatives. *Short vocab and sentence translation quiz.*

Assignments for Thursday Nov.11: P.111 D) 1-5 and P.115 E) 1 and 2

Thursday Nov.11: Lessons 21 and 22: XQ| as irregular verb; feminine plural nouns; a lot about רv,a] Translations of D) on p.111 and E) on p.115 in full session or small groups.

Assignments for Tuesday Nov.16: P.118 E). Written homework to be handed in: P.124 D) KEEP WORKING ON VOCABULARY.

Tuesday Nov.16: Hand in written homework assignment. Lessons 23 and 24: suffix pronouns; suffix pronouns with the DDO; participles in regular and irregular verbs. Translation of p.118 E) in full session or small groups.

Assignments for Thursday Nov.18: P.130 D) 1-14 or as far as you can get.

Thursday Nov.18: Lessons 25 and 26: Dual endings and infinitives; roots with a ה as third root consonant; translation of p.130 D) 1-14 or as far as we can get.

Assignments for Tuesday Nov.23: Review the Noun on pages 131-135; Vocabulary words 1-175. P.139 E) P.142 E)

Tuesday Nov.23: Lessons 27 and 28: Hollow verbs; the Hif'il stem; Short translation quiz.

Assignments for Tuesday Nov.30: P.148 D); E) 7-11; P. 152 D) P.152 E) *Written homework.*

Tuesday Nov.30: Hand in written homework. Lessons 29 and 30: Hif'il verbs continued; emphatic ה. Translation of p.148 D); E) 7-11.

Assignments for Thursday Dec.2: P.155 E) 8-11; P.157 30.6 P.158 D) 11 and 12. **KEEP MEMORIZING VOCABULARY!**

Thursday Dec.2: Lessons 31 and 32: infinitives of hollow verbs; shortened forms in vav conversive. Translation of assigned passages in full session or small groups.

Assignment for Tuesday Dec.7: P.161 E); p.164 G). Begin reviewing grammar learned so far with help of handouts and blackboard.

WE WILL SPEND THE LAST WEEK OF CLASSES IN REVIEW OF THE GRAMMAR LEARNED SO FAR IN PREPARATION FOR THE FINAL EXAM. NO NEW GRAMMAR WILL BE PRESENTED.

