

**ADVANCED HEBREW READING
FALL SEMESTER 2013**

SYLLABUS AND SCHEDULE

Course Description

Hebrew reading is intended to maintain and increase skills in reading and translating the Hebrew text. It is thus intended both for the student who does not want to lose the information learned in Introductory Hebrew and Hebrew exegesis and for those who want to advance their ability to read and translate as well as to build up Hebrew vocabulary. Basic points of Hebrew grammar will be reiterated and more intricate facets of grammar and syntax will be introduced. This semester's text will be a large portion of the Book of Esther.

Objectives

At the end of the course students should be more comfortable with the Hebrew language and the biblical text, and have a more permanent basic vocabulary than before they began the course. The level of ease with which the student approaches the Hebrew text will facilitate biblical study on all levels.

Method

Students will prepare an assigned portion of Hebrew text from the book of Esther to read aloud and translate during the class meeting. Questions of grammar should be noted and brought to class; all verb forms should be parsed and basic meaning provided. If asked, a student should be able to assign each word its function in the sentence. Vocabulary lists of each text should be meticulously kept.

Requirements

Students should come prepared to class. It is preferred that one reads and translates without consulting notes, but grace will be extended to those whose nerves will not stand the tension. Around midterm the class will devote one period to an oral test of material already studied until that point in the course. At the end of the semester, we meet in the same way to go over material read during the second half of the semester. Constant rehearsing of vocabulary knowledge is a vital component of preparation throughout the course.

Evaluation

Grades will be assigned on the basis of preparedness for class sessions and the two oral test periods. Each part will receive a third of the total value of the grade.

Resources

For this course all that is required is the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* and the *Koehler Baumgartner Lexicon* or HAL. If the acquisition of HAL is a financial burden, the library copy may be used for study. For those curious about grammar, *Gesenius Hebrew*

Grammar edited by Ernst Kautzsch, known as *Gesenius Kautzsch* is a valuable tool, as is G.M. Landes *Building Your Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary*, Scott's *A Simplified Guide to BHS*, Reinhard Wonneberger's *Understanding BHS, a Manual for the Users of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* and Ernst Würthwein's *The Text of the Old Testament*. *Bible Works* is recommended only for those who already work on an advanced level.

Johanna's helpful hints:

Read the Hebrew text aloud to yourself, a few times. Note down places where you have difficulty and bring questions to class.

Write everything down! Roots, verb meanings, composition of words etc.

Keep going over your vocabulary lists. MEMORIZE, MEMORIZE, MEMORIZE – It is the secret of learning any language.

SCHEDULE

In preparation for our first meeting, read the Intro to Esther in one of your Study Bibles and read through the entire English text of Esther. We will not be able to translate every chapter, and at times I have assigned sections to read in English. I am drawing up a schedule but will make adjustments according to the needs of the class.

As with the practice of music, practicing your Hebrew skills each day for a short period of time will be more efficient than using large blocks of time at the last minute.

Prep for 9/11/13: Esther 1: 1-15 in English. Continue reading in Hebrew and translating as of v.16. Get as far as you can. We aim to read vv.16-21 in Hebrew. Be alert where there are names that occur as Memucan, Vashti, Ahasuerus, Persians and Medes.

Wednesday Sept.11

Introduction to Esther. A few verses in Hebrew as of 1:16. Using Fokkelman's twelve-step scale of signification.

Prep for 9/18/13: Hebrew 1:16-21

Wednesday Sept.18

Brief discussion of Chapter 1. Reading Esther 1: 16-21.

Prep for 9/25/13: English: Esther 2:1-4, 12-14 and 19-23;

Hebrew: Esther 2: 5-11 and 15-18. Be alert to the names in vv.5-7: Mordecai, Ya'ir, Shimei, Kish, Benjaminite, Jeconiah, Nebuchadnezzar, Hadassah, Esther etc.

English: Esther 3:1-7; Hebrew: 8-15

Wednesday Sept.25

Reading Esther 2: 5-11 and 15-18

Prep for 10/2/13: **English: Esther 3: 1-7: Hebrew: Esther 3: 8-15**

Wednesday Oct 2

Esther 3. Reading and translating Hebrew 3: 8-15

Prep for 10/9/13: **Hebrew: Esther 4: 1-8**

Wednesday Oct.9

Reading Esther 4:1-8. Locating this chapter in the rest of the book

Prep for 10/23/13: Review all sections read in Hebrew, vocabulary, verb forms etc. for in-class oral on 10/23/13

Oct.14-17 Research and Study week

Wednesday Oct 23

Oral review of Esther 1: 16 - 4:8

Prep for 10/30/13: **Hebrew: Esther 4: 9-17.**

Wednesday Oct 30

Esther 4: 9-17. Brief discussion of Esther and Mordecai in the story.

Prep for 11/6/13: **Hebrew: Esther 5: 1-8 and 13-15; English: Esther 5: 9-12**

Wednesday Nov 6

Esther 5: 1-8 and 13-15

Prep for 11/13/13 **English: Esther 6: 1-5; Hebrew: Esther 6: 6-14.**

Wednesday Nov 13

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Hebrew: Esther 6: 6-14;

Prep for 11/20/13: Hebrew: Esther 7: 1-11; English: Esther 8: 1-17.

Wednesday Nov 20

Esther 7: 1-11; Esther in Esther

Prep for 11/27/13 English: Esther 9: 1-23; Hebrew: Esther 9: 24-32

Wednesday Nov.27

Esther 9: 24-32

Prep for 12/4/13: Begin review of Hebrew sections read Esther 4: 9 – 9:32.

Wednesday Dec 4

Rehearsing review

Wednesday Dec 11: 12:30-1:30: Oral review final.

