

OT 101-3: Elements of Biblical Hebrew
Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary
Spring 2022
Mon & Weds 4:30 – 5:50 PM
Schlegel 123

Instructor Contact

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Tutor Contact

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Tutoring Sessions:
Tues and Wed at 6 PM
Fri at noon

Course Description

For more than two thousand years since the books of the Hebrew Bible were first written, these texts have remained a dynamic source of spiritual guidance and inspiration for people developing diverse cultures, religious traditions, and artistic expressions. Yet, few of us have ever read the *Hebrew* Bible itself. During this semester, students will take one important step toward appreciating the richness, depth, and beauty that is the Hebrew Bible. This course prepares students to use Hebrew as a tool in the exegesis of biblical texts. Students with no previous experience in language will gain the basic ability to read and translate biblical Hebrew. In addition, students will discover resources to assist in a lifelong journey toward fluency in biblical Hebrew.

Learning Goals

By completing this course, students will achieve:

1. A basic understanding of Hebrew grammar, syntax, and vocabulary.
2. The ability to vocalize and translate basic biblical Hebrew prose.
3. A strong familiarity with the most common Hebrew verbal stem as well as a working knowledge of the more advanced stems.

Required Books

Hackett, Jo Ann. *A Basic Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (Hackett)

*NOTE: You must bring Hackett to class every day.

Recommended Books

Students will be introduced to each of the following books toward the end of this course. For the student who wants to use Hebrew in their professional or personal study beyond this class, having a Hebrew Bible, lexicon, and vocabulary book will be invaluable. For the student who is not interested in continuing their studies of Hebrew, purchase of these resources would be unnecessary.

Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (BHS)

A Lexicon from among the choices below:

- *Brown, Driver, and Briggs Hebrew English Lexicon* (BDB)
- *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (HALOT)
- Holladay, William. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Holladay)

A student vocabulary book from among the following two choices:

- Landes, George M. *Building Your Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary* (Landes)
- Mitchell, Larry A. *A Student's Vocabulary for Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic* (Mitchell)

Grading

Participation	10%
Homework	10%
Quizzes*	20%
Midterm	20%
Final**	40%

*The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. In other words, your grade will be determined by 8 out of the 9 quizzes.

**In order for any student to pass the class, they must receive a grade above 60% on the final exam and an average above 60% in the class.

Assignments

Participation

Active participation is required in all sessions. Before arriving at class, students must watch the appropriate lecture on YouTube. There are links to each of these lectures on Canvas and in the Class Schedule below. While watching the lecture, students should consult Hackett and [the PDFs of the lecture slides](#) in order to best learn the material. Bring any questions that you have to class so that we can discuss them.

Aside from simply answering questions, active participation can be shown through activities like listening attentively to others, responding to others, asking relevant questions, and taking notes.

Your participation will be graded based upon the following:

- Prompt attendance (see Course Policies below)
- Being prepared with Hackett, homework, and anything else necessary for that particular day of class
- Active participation (see explanation above)

Homework

Learning a new language does not require youth or a special aptitude or a sound like rushing wind accompanied by tongues of fire. Of course, those things might help, but for the rest of us, we work with what we can control. Perhaps the greatest factor that can help you learn Hebrew well is diligent completion of all the homework.

After every chapter from Hackett that we cover, students will be asked to complete selected and/or modified exercises from the book that are shared on Canvas. It is your responsibility to complete the HW assignment. Keep in mind that **you are not graded for accuracy on the homework assignment**. You are graded based on completion. The student who completes their assignment with every sentence correct because they looked up the answers will fare poorer on the quizzes and exams than the student who struggles with many wrong answers in the homework and learns from their mistakes.

Quizzes

During nine (9) classes (see schedule), students will take a timed quiz at the start of class. See schedule below for content covered in each quiz.

Exams

A **midterm exam** will take the place of class on **April 3**. The **final exam** will take place during finals week. Both exams are cumulative and follow the same basic format as most quizzes.

***NOTE

I want you to learn Hebrew, and I want you to earn whatever grade that you desire for the class. In order to learn better or improve your grade, you can retake (a modified version) of any quiz or exam within one week of the original test date. Students must schedule re-takes outside of class time.

Course Schedule

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Assignment Due</u>	<u>Quizzes and Exams</u>
1	2/6		
2	2/8	Learn the Hebrew Alphabet Hackett Ch. 2-5 Lecture for Chapter 2 – 5 Part 1	
3	2/13	Hackett Ch. 2-5 Lecture for Chapter 2 – 5 Part 2	
4	2/15	Hackett Ch. 6 Lecture for Chapter 6	
5	2/20	Hackett Ch. 6 Continued	Quiz 1 (Ch. 2 – 5)
6	2/22	Hackett Ch. 7 Lecture for Chapter 7	
7	2/27	Hackett Ch. 8 Lecture for Chapter 8	Quiz 2 (Ch. 2 – 6)
8	3/1	Hackett Ch. 9 Lecture for Chapter 9	
9	3/6	Hackett Ch. 10 Lecture for Chapter 10	Quiz 3 (Ch. 2 – 8)
10	3/8	Hackett Ch. 11 Lecture for Chapter 11	
11	3/20	Hackett Ch. 12 Lecture for Chapter 12	Quiz 4 (Ch. 2 – 10)
12	3/22	Hackett Ch. 12 continued	
13	3/27	Hackett Ch. 13 Lecture for Chapter 13	Quiz 5 (Qal Prefix Paradigm)

14	3/29	Hackett Ch. 14 Lecture for Chapter 14	
15	4/3	MIDTERM	MIDTERM (Ch. 2 – 12)
16	4/5	Hackett Ch. 15 Lecture for Chapter 15	
17	4/10	Hackett Ch. 16 Lecture for Chapter 16	Quiz 6 (Ch. 2 – 14)
18	4/12	Hackett Ch. 17 Lecture for Chapter 17	
19	4/17	Hackett Ch. 18 Lecture for Chapter 18	Quiz 7 (Ch. 2 – 16)
20	4/19	Introduction to Derived Stems	
21	4/24	Introduction to Student Vocabularies and Lexicons	Quiz 8 (Ch. 2 – 18)
22	4/26	Introduction to <i>BHS</i> and Lexicons continued	
23	5/1	Introduction to Blue Letter Bible	Quiz 9 (Derived Stems)
24	5/3	Review for Final Exam	

Course Policies

Inclusive and Expansive Language

Whether you are aware of this fact or not, Louisville Seminary emphasizes the use of inclusive and expansive language with regards to people in our written and oral communications. This intentionality of language should be representative of the span of humanity with respect to gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, as well as physical and intellectual capacities. With gender, for example, “humankind” is an inclusive alternative to the androcentric term “mankind.” For many of us, this type of writing, speaking, and thinking may be new or different and we encourage you to continue to work with it as one aspect of proclaiming the truth of the gospel for all people.

In this course, we will also discuss God with this intentionality of language in mind. While it is clear that the Bible often uses masculine forms to refer to God, the Christian faith has always taught that God is beyond male and female. In keeping with the Christian conviction that God is neither male nor female and the attempt to remain intentional with our language, you are encouraged to either avoid gendered pronouns when referring to God or use pronouns that intentionally reflect the metaphors, theology, or claims you are making. Part of this expectation is that members of this community will be intentional with what we say rather than complicit in perpetuating biases based upon our ignorance or lack of effort. To help us remain intentional with our language, the instructor may encourage students, on occasion, to remain cognizant of the language that we use.

Your translations of the biblical text need not be altered to conform with this policy.

Attendance

Prompt attendance is mandatory. Excessive tardiness (in time or frequency) constitutes an absence. Every unexcused absence negatively effects your participation grade. Excused absences are rarely possible with the consent of the instructor. For an excused absence, it is your responsibility to inform the instructor ahead of time via email.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to submit their own work. Students can work together on homework, but each must submit their own assignment. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff at the Academic Support Center. For more information, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Policy on Late Work

All assignments must be turned in on time. One exception will be made for late submission of homework. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get the homework assignment turned in on time.

Bibliography

- Arnold, Bill T., and John H. Choi. *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs. *A Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907.
- Hackett, Jo Ann. *A Basic Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2010.
- Holladay, William L. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Leiden: Brill, 2000.
- Koehler, Ludwig, and Walter Baumgartner. *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated by M. E. J. Richardson. Study Edition. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2001.
- Scott, William R. *A Simplified Guide to BHS: Critical Apparatus, Masora, Accents, Unusual Letters and Other Markings*. 4th ed. Berkeley, CA: Bibal Press, 1987.
- Waltke, Bruce K., and M. O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbraus, 1990.
- Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. 5th corrected edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997.