

# OT 101-3: ELEMENTS OF BIBLICAL HEBREW

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Fall 2018

Tues & Thur 1:30 – 2:50 PM

Schlegel Hall 122

## LEARNING GOALS

In the course of the semester, students will achieve:

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

## CONTACT

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Jesus reading from the Isaiah scroll. Image taken from freebibleimages.org



## COURSE DESCRIPTION

In more than two thousand years since the Hebrew Bible was originally composed, it has remained a source of spiritual guidance and inspiration for people in diverse cultures, religious traditions, and artistic endeavors. And yet, few of us have ever read the *Hebrew Bible* itself. During this semester, students will take one important step toward appreciating the richness 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 the language will gain the basic tools for reading and translating biblical Hebrew. In addition, students will discover resources to assist in a lifelong journey toward fluency in biblical Hebrew.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

- *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS)
- *Brown Driver and Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (BDB)
- Hackett, Jo Ann. *A Basic Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (Hackett)
- Landes, George M. *Building Your Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary* (Landes)

**SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS**

- Holladay, William. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Leiden: Brill, 1988.
- Mitchell, Larry A. *A Student's Vocabulary for Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1984.

**CONTRACT GRADING**

In order to facilitate a high level of transparency as a teacher and a low level of anxiety for students trying to “make-the-grade,” the contract-grading system below has been implemented. This means that, based upon your individual learning goals, participants can decide how much work each person wants to do for this course and expect a corresponding grade within the range displayed below.

**C Level Work**

- No more than 6 total absences
- Active participation during class time
- Submit all fully completed HW assignments
- No more than 2 HW assignments may be submitted late
- An average grade above 70% on your best 7 out of 9 quizzes
- An average of 60% or above on the combined midterm and final exams

**B Level Work**

- All of the requirements of the previous level
- Submit all fully completed HW assignments on time (1 exception)
- An average grade above 80% on your best 8 out of 9 quizzes
- An average of 80% or above on the combined midterm and final exams

**A Level Work**

- All of the requirements of the previous levels
- Complete 6 additional quizzes
- An average grade of 90% or above on 13 out of your 15 best quizzes
- An average of 90% or above on the combined midterm and final exams

**METHODS OF WRITTEN ASSESSMENT**

**Homework:** After every chapter from Hackett that is covered during class, students will be asked to complete (credit/no credit) selected and/or modified exercises from the book BEFORE the start of the following class. These assignments will be uploaded to the CAAMS portal.

**Quizzes:** During 9 classes, students will take quizzes (see schedule). Each quiz will test grammar, vocabulary, and translation according to the material from Hackett up to and including the chapter covered in the previous class. Students aiming for a grade in the A range will be expected to answer additional vocabulary questions (based on Landes) beyond the vocabulary tested for other students.

**Exams:** A cumulative **Midterm** will take the place of class on October 23. The **Final** is on December 12 or 13 (TBD).

## **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 for 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 avoid gendered pronouns when referring to God. Part of the expectation is that members of this community will be intentional with what we say rather than complicit in perpetuating biases (especially those we don't agree with) 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 we use.

Direct quotations and translations from the biblical text need not be altered to conform to this policy.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Prompt attendance is mandatory because attendance and participation is crucial to learning a new language. Excessive tardiness (in time or frequency) constitutes an absence. Three unexcused absences negate your grading contract. If absences become a problem, students must meet with the instructor regarding the possibility of passing this class.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students are expected to submit only their own work. The use of any ideas or words from an outside source must be acknowledged by an appropriate citation of the author and source. Failure to follow these guidelines constitutes plagiarism and may result in failure of this course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. 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 during the first two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) 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 homework assignments come from the exercises at the end of each chapter in Hackett. Each written assignment is due on the date that said chapter is listed in this syllabus. More than 3 late assignments will negate your C grading contract. Only 1 late HW assignment can be excused for the B or A grading contract.

### **USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

In this class, electronic devices (including phones, tablets, and laptops) are unnecessary except on the days specifically designated for such uses. Therefore, our policy is that during class time we will avoid the distraction of such devices. In exceptional cases, they can be accessed with prior permission from the instructor.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Assignment Due</u>	<u>Quizzes and Tests</u>
<b>09/06</b>		
<b>09/11</b>	Hackett chap. 2-3	
<b>09/13</b>	Hackett chap. 4-5	Quiz 1: Alphabet
<b>09/18</b>	Hackett chap. 6	
<b>09/20</b>	Hackett chap. 7	Quiz 2: Vowels and Syllables
<b>09/25</b>	Hackett chap. 8 (In class: Introduction to Landes)	Quiz 3
<b>09/27</b>	Hackett chap. 9; Landes I:1, III:72	
<b>10/02</b>	Hackett chap. 10; Landes I:2, III:73	Quiz 4
<b>10/04</b>	Hackett chap. 11; Landes I:3, III:74	
<b>10/09</b>	Hackett chap. 12; Landes I:4, III:75	Quiz 5
<b>10/11</b>	Hackett chap. 13; Landes I:5, III:76	
	Research Week (prepare for Midterm)	
<b>10/23</b>		<b>MIDTERM</b>
<b>10/25</b>	Hackett chap. 14; Landes I:6, III:77	
<b>10/30</b>	Hackett chap. 15; Landes I:7, III:78	
<b>11/01</b>	Hackett chap. 16; Landes I:8, II:53, III:79	Quiz 6
<b>11/06</b>	Hackett chap. 17; Landes I:9, II:54, III:80	
<b>11/08</b>	Hackett chap. 18; Landes I:10, II:55, III:81	Quiz 7
<b>11/13</b>	(In class: Introduction to Derived Hebrew Stems)	
<b>11/15</b>	Selections from Hackett chap. 25; Landes I:11, II:56	Quiz 8
<b>11/20</b>	NO CLASS	
<b>11/27</b>	Selections from Hackett chap. 26-27; Landes I:12, II:57	
<b>11/29</b>	Selections from Hackett chap. 28; Landes I:13	Quiz 9
<b>12/04</b>	Selections from Hackett chap. 30; Landes I:14	
<b>12/06</b>	(In class: Introduction to Blue Letter Bible)	
<b>12/13 or 14</b>		<b>FINAL EXAM</b>