

OT 101-3: Elements of Biblical Hebrew
Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary
Spring 2020
Tues & Thurs 10:00 – 11:20 AM
Schlegel Hall 121

Instructor Contact

Justin Reed

jreed@lpts.edu

502.895.3411 ext. 389

Schlegel 304

Office Hours: email for appointment

Tutor Contact

Emma Loane

emma.loane@my.lpts.edu

Sessions Tues and Thur 8:30 – 9:30 AM

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 tools for reading and translating 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.

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)

Recommended Books

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)
- Scott, William R. *A Simplified Guide to BHS*

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 9 out of the 10 quizzes.

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

Assignments

Participation

Active participation is required in all class sessions. Students should come to class prepared to discuss the assigned chapters and homework assignments. 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)
- Arrival prepared with Hackett, homework, and anything else necessary for that particular day of class
- Active participation (see explanation above)
- Evidence that the student read the assigned chapter(s) from Hackett BEFORE class

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 of 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 I will post on CAMS. These exercises must be turned in at the start of the following class. Students must print out the assignment from CAMS, write their answers, and submit the assignment in class. LATE HOMEWORK IS NOT accepted.

After the homework is graded, it will be returned to students during class. PLEASE read the feedback since this will help you learn the language and prepare for quizzes and exams.

Quizzes

During ten (10) classes, students will take a quiz (see schedule) near the beginning of class but after their previous homework is returned. 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. The quiz WILL NOT test the material due for the class on the date of the quiz.

Exams

A **midterm** exam will take the place of class on March 24. The date and time for the **final** exam is to be determined. Both exams are cumulative.

Course Schedule

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Assignment Due</u>	<u>Quizzes and Exams</u>
1	2/6	Learn the Hebrew Alphabet Hackett Ch. 2-3	
2	2/11	Hackett Ch. 4-5	
3	2/13	Hackett Ch. 6	Quiz 1 (alphabet and vowel sounds)
4	2/18	Hackett Ch. 7	Quiz 2
5	2/20	Hackett Ch. 8	
6	2/25	Hackett Ch. 9	Quiz 3
7	2/27	Hackett Ch. 10	
8	3/3	Hackett Ch. 11	Quiz 4
9	3/5	Hackett Ch. 12	
10	3/10	Hackett Ch. 13	Quiz 5

11	3/12	Hackett Ch. 14	
12	3/24	MIDTERM	MIDTERM
13	3/26	Hackett Ch. 15	
14	3/31	Hackett Ch. 16	Quiz 6
15	4/2	Hackett Ch. 17	
16	4/7	Hackett Ch. 18	Quiz 7
17	4/9	In Class: Introduction to Derived Stems	
18	4/14	NO CLASS	
19	4/16	In Class: How to Use a Lexicon	
20	4/21	Selections from Hackett Ch. 25	Quiz 8
21	4/23	Selections from Hackett Ch. 26-27	

22	4/28	Selections from Hackett Ch. 28	Quiz 9
23	4/30	Selections from Hackett Ch. 30	
24	5/5	In Class: Introduction to Blue Letter Bible	Quiz 10
25	5/7	Review for Final Exam (date of Final, 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 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 (especially those we do not 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 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 affects 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.