

METRO ATLANTA SEMINARY – NORTH CAMPUS  
 HEBREW FOR BIBLE STUDY  
 FINAL ASSIGNMENT: GETTING INTO THE TEXT

**Goals:**

This assignment is designed to do three things:

- Continue to develop to students ability to identify and describe features of the Hebrew text
- Increase the ability of the student to draw interpretive conclusions from these features
- Introduce the student to engaging with commentators, evaluating and integrating other's observations into their own.

**Content:**

Examine Zephaniah 3:17. The second half of this verse is a triplet:

Hebrew Text	ESV
יְשִׁישׁ עָלֶיךָ בְּשִׂמְחָה יִחְרִישׁ בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ יְגִיל עָלֶיךָ בְּרִנָּה	...he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing
	NIV
	He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing
	NRSV
	He will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing

The first and third lines of this triplet seems to have some consistency across translations, but the second line demonstrates quite a bit of variation. This usually indicates that there is something difficult (and therefore *interesting!*) in the underlying text.

Your **first task** is to examine it yourself and see what sense you can make of the text, especially the curious verb *yahārîš* (Hiphil *hrš*). Look at what definition your lexicon gives for the verb in the Qal and see if you can follow the meaning to the Hiphil stem. Examine other uses of the verb in the various, and identify patterns, eg. what are the commonly used subjects and objects of this verb? Can you establish how it is regularly used? Does Zeph 3:17 follow this pattern or is it an exception?

For the **second part**, look at O. Palmer Robertson's commentary on this passage.<sup>1</sup> Read and explain his interpretation – specifically, the *grammatical* portion of his argument, not the theological conclusion. Is it convincing, or does it lack something? Which translations (if any) follow his interpretation?

This is not just a matter of saying “I agree” or “I disagree” with Robertson. This is an exercise in formulating your own (tentative) interpretation and then comparing it to someone else's to note agreement, disagreement, and where an expert might help answer questions and identify blind spots in

<sup>1</sup> O. Palmer Robertson, *The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 333-347, esp. 340-342.

your interpretation. This is why its important to have some idea about your interpretation before turning to your commentaries. If you read a commentary first, you'll be prone to just parrot what the author has said; even if you look at several commentaries, you can end up picking which ever one you like the best without seriously engaging them or the text.

Other commentaries to look at:

Kenneth L. Barker, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, New American Commentary

Adele Berlin, *Zephaniah*, Anchor Bible

J. Alec Motyer in *Minor Prophets*, ed. by Thomas McCominsky

J.J.M. Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, Old Testament Library

Ralph L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, Word Biblical Commentary

Marvin Sweeney, *Zephaniah*, Hermeneia

**Due Date:** Tuesday, 10/10/17, 5:20 PM

Hard copy or Electronic (.doc or .pdf attached to e-mail) is acceptable. Please note formatting requirements:

- 12 pt. Times New Roman Font
- Double Spaced
- 1 inch margins
- No cover page needed; put name and “Final Assignement” in the top left corner of page.
- Only black ink

Estimated 2-3 pages.