

METRO ATLANTA SEMINARY – NORTH CAMPUS
HEBREW FOR BIBLE STUDY
Tuesdays, Aug 15-Oct 3rd, 5:20 PM-7:40 PM

Course Description:

This course is the first in a series of three designed to instruct students in interpretation of the Old Testament. It is an introduction to Biblical Hebrew, the principal language of the Old Testament. It is not designed for students to be able to read Scripture in the original languages; rather, the goals are that students would become proficient and responsible exegetes of their English Bibles as well as that they would be able to interact with and evaluate material such as commentaries, journal articles, etc. by scholars that do employ the original languages.

Goals:

By the end of the course, the student should be able to approach the Old Testament Bible and, with the aid of exegetical tools, give a competent description of the primary grammatical, lexical, and syntactical elements of a passage with the eventual outcome of an interpretation and application of that passage. Specific skills in service of this goal are:

- Learning the Hebrew Alphabet, including vowel points
- Understanding the Hebrew verbal system
- Composing a thorough word study

Materials:

- Michael Williams, *The Biblical Hebrew Companion for Software Users: Grammatical Terms Explained for Exegesis* (Zondervan, 2015)
- *Logos Bible Software – Bronze Package*¹

Note: This course is heavily dependent on technology. It is therefore assumed you have regular access to and competency using a computer installed with the *Logos* software. If able, please bring your computer with you to class as we will be doing exercises using the software.

¹ Over time, the packages and individual items offered by Logos software may vary. The basic elements needed for this class are 1) a tagged Hebrew Bible text (eg. Lexham Hebrew Bible, Anderson-Forbes Analyzed Text, Biblica Westmonasteriensis, etc.) and 2) a Hebrew lexicon (eg. BDB, CHALOT, etc.)

Class Schedule:

Wk	Date	Material	Reading Assignment in <i>BHCSU</i> ²
1	8/15	Introduction to the Language // Alphabet	
2	8/22	Vowels // Pronunciation	Pgs. 120-140
3	8/29	Nouns // Adjectives // Conjunctions	Noun (72-73); Masculine (66-67); Feminine (40-41); Singular (110-111); Dual (36-37); Plural (94-95); Adjective (12-13); Construct (26-27); Absolute (28-29); Definite Article (28-29)
4	9/5	Verbs // Syntax	Verb (114-115); Root (108-109); Person (90-91); Qal (106-107); Conjugation (22-23); Perfect (88-89); Imperfect (52-53); Waw-consecutive (116-117)
5	9/12	Prepositions // Particles // Pronouns	Adverb (14-15); Preposition (96-97); Pronoun (98-103); Particle (86-87); Negating Particle (68-69); Directional He (34-35)
6	9/19	More Verbs (Infinitives, Modals, Participles)	Imperative (52-53); Jussive (62-63); Cohortative (18-19); Participle, active and passive (82-85); Infinitive Absolute (54-55); Infinitive Construct (56-57)
7	9/25	Even <i>More</i> Verbs (Derived Stems)	Stem (112-113); Niphal (70-71); Piel (92-93); Pual (104-105); Hiphil (42-43); Hophal (48-49); Hitpaal (46-47); Hishtaphel (44-45)
8	10/3	Putting it all together	

Attendance:

Per MAS policy, attendance at all class meetings is required. If a student is unable to attend a class due to uncontrollable circumstances, they should notify the instructor as early as possible. An additional assignment may be required of the student if a class is missed. Tardies in excess of 15 minutes may be counted as an absence. More than one absence may result in failure/withdrawal from the course.

Other Policies:

Please inform the instructor if any accommodations need to be made regarding disability or other specific need. All other policies of MAS including academic integrity, discipline, and student behavior apply. Please refer to the student handbook.

² Reading assignments should be completed *before* the class in which they are due. Some material may need explanation, but it benefits the student greatly to have been exposed to the material prior to discussion.

Assignments:

Each assignment is due in class by the dates below. (More details will be provided on the written assignments as the course progresses.)

Week 2 : Quiz over alphabet

Week 3 : Quiz over vowels

Week 5 : Written assignment (Gen 31:20, 26, 27)

Week 7 : Written assignment (Ex 20:13)

Week 8 : Quiz *Revivodus*

Final, Oct 10 : Written Assignment (Zeph 3:15)

Mentor Assignment : Due no later than the last class

Quizzes will be held in the first 15 minutes of class. Written assignments may be turned in via hard copy or as a digital file to my e-mail. Due to the pace of this class, late assignments will not be accepted except in cases of unforeseen and substantial emergency (illness/injury of self or dependent). I recognize that each of us have lives and responsibilities outside MAS; however, you have made a commitment to this task, and that must necessarily entail some sacrifice in order to meet that task.

Grading:

Class participation and preparation:	20%
Weekly Assignments + Mentor Paper:	60% (10% each)
Final Paper:	20%

Grading Scale:

A	90-100%	Exceptional work, demonstrating mastery of material
B	80-89%	Satisfactory work, demonstrating competence of the material
C	70-79%	Passable work, demonstrating understanding, though not competence, of material
F	69% and below	Unsatisfactory work

Office Hours:

The instructor is able and willing to meet prior to class up to 1 hour prior to the start, as well as being accessible by phone/skype/etc., during the week. Please do not hesitate to contact me to set up a time to meet.

The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus as the course progresses and as needs dictate. All changes will be distributed to the students in writing or via e-mail.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Often, the bibliographies are appended to a syllabus aim to be comprehensive and are therefore overwhelming to the beginning student. The world of Biblical Hebrew is huge, and a bibliography could run for many pages. This bibliography is an attempt to give students a brief picture of a few resources that would be most useful to them at this level of their study.

Arnold, Bill T. and John H. Choi, *Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

This text has become a standard in the field as a reference work for the various grammatical and syntactical features of the Hebrew language and is well organized with plenty of examples.

Chisholm, Robert B. *From Exegesis to Exposition: A Practical Guide to Using Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008.

Designed for second year Hebrew students, this book bridges the gap between learning the fundamental elements of the Hebrew language (eg. Morphology, parsings, etc.) and the task of interpretation and exposition of the text. Because much of the material that would otherwise learn in a traditional Hebrew class is embedded in the software, this book could usefully used alongside it to answer the question “so what?” – how do the features of the Hebrew identified by the software culminate in a coherent interpretation?

Long, Gary A. *Grammatical Concepts 101 for Biblical Hebrew*, 2nd Ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013.

This book thorough explains many of the more technical grammatical concepts you might wrestle with in interpreting the Hebrew of the OT.

Stuart, Douglas. *Old Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*, 4th Ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2009.

This handbook is an overview of the whole exegetical process in a step-by-step process as well as including a very thorough bibliography for each step. It is designed for use by those with the capability to the language and those without.

Van Pelt, Miles V. *Biblical Hebrew: A Compact Guide*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012.

A condensation of the widely used grammar by van Pelt and Gary Practico, this is a useful pocket guide for quick reference.

Van Pelt, Miles V. *English Grammar to Ace Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zonderva., 2012.

Oftentimes the first hurdle students must overcome in language study is their deficiency in their native tongue – no necessarily in speaking it, but being able to speak *about* it in grammatical terms, and being able to explain *why* English behaves the way it does. This book helps fill in those gaps.