



HARDING SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

5090 Beginning Hebrew I Fall 2023, Tuesdays 8:15-10:55 AM

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“When my soul was on fire with bad thoughts, as a last resource I became a scholar to a monk who had been a Jew, to learn of him the Hebrew alphabet; and, from the judicious rules of Qumtilian, the copious flowing eloquence of Cicero, the grave style of Pronto, and the smoothness of Pliny, I turned to this language of hissing and broken-winded words. What labor it cost me, what difficulties I went through, how often I despaired and left off, and how I began again to learn, both I myself who felt the burden can witness, and they also who lived with me. And I thank our Lord that I now gather such sweet fruit from the bitter sowing of those studies.”
- Jerome, Letter 125.12

Welcome to Biblical Hebrew! The purpose of this course is to acquire a basic knowledge of Biblical Hebrew in order to read prose texts. Biblical Hebrew is the ancient Semitic language in which (most of) the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible was written. Other texts written in ancient Hebrew are found in several hundred inscriptions, letters, and administrative documents discovered by archaeologists, as well as in the Dead Sea scrolls. Biblical Hebrew was used in ancient Israel from about 1000 BCE until roughly the destruction of the second Jewish temple in 70 CE. Since then it has been preserved in these ancient texts and in the Jewish religious practices.

COURSE GOALS

Our goals pertain to the italicized intended degree outcomes for the M.Div., M.A.C.M., and the M.A. degrees.

Demonstrate exegetical skills in the interpretation of scripture

1. To translate sections of biblical Hebrew narrative without notes. Our focus is Hebrew prose because it is simpler and more predictable.
2. To learn the particulars of Hebrew grammar and memorize all of the vocabulary words in *Learning Biblical Hebrew*.
3. To vocalize Hebrew words and sentences. Reading Hebrew aloud with correct pronunciation of consonants, vowels, and accentuation is an essential part of the Hebrew tradition and language learning. Vocalization will be stressed.

Evidence a love for God and others and a personal commitment to spiritual formation

4. To develop the spiritual discipline of studying biblical languages. Do not lose sight of what you are learning to read – an ancient and authoritative book, a witness to God’s work among His people. Learning a language requires self-discipline, endurance, memorization, and repetition. There is no quick and easy way to learning biblical Hebrew. When you seek to learn a language for the sake of knowing God better, you devote yourself to a discipline of the Spirit.

TEXT BOOKS

Kutz, Karl V. and Rebekah L. Josberger. *Learning Biblical Hebrew: Reading for Comprehension: An Introductory Grammar*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2018.

_____. *Learning Biblical Hebrew Workbook: A Graded Reader with Exercises*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2019.

Elliger, K. and W. Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. (Recommended)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Quizzes (20%)** – With the exception of the first week, midterm week, and final week, we will have a quiz (total of 12 quizzes). You may take the quiz any time between class periods. All material that we have covered prior to the class is fair game, but the focus will be on the most recent chapters from the textbook. I will clarify as we go along. I will count your 10 best quiz grades. The quizzes are closed book and will be taken in Canvas. I expect that students will act with integrity in taking the quizzes.
2. **Midterm (30%) and Final (40%)** – The midterm and final are cumulative and comprehensive. Distance students need to arrange proctors for these exams. They will be taken on paper, because students may have to produce Hebrew paradigms and specified forms (unlike the quizzes).
3. **Oral Recitation (5%)** – The ability to read Hebrew aloud is both an important skill and a continuation of a venerable tradition. You will therefore be required to prepare two texts for oral recitation, Gen 1:1-5 and Deut 6:4-9. You will perform each of these texts in the second half of the semester (see schedule). You may choose to memorize the text, but this is not a requirement. A good oral reading of the Bible is available at <https://www.torahclass.com/audio-bible-in-hebrew>. There are also slower recordings of both texts in Canvas.
4. **Preparation (5%)** – You need to attend all classes and study sessions unless you have an emergency. It is essential to your progress. Come to class having completed the assignments and ready to read the translation for the day. Practice reading the Hebrew text aloud *before* coming to class.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Accessibility/Communication

HST professors are accessible to local and distance students. Please use the following to arrange appointments with me (in person or by phone):

Email: hsmith6@harding.edu

Cell Phone Number: (615) 306-5062

The best way to communicate with me is by email. I check it often and expect you to check it as well for class announcements and additional documents. Feel free to contact me with your questions any time. I will use Canvas and your Harding University email address, so please make sure to check both regularly.

Credit Hour Workload

For every course credit hour, the typical student should expect to spend at least three clock hours per week of concentrated attention on course-related work, including but not limited to time attending class, as well as out-of-class time spent reading, reviewing, organizing notes, preparing for upcoming quizzes/exams, problem solving, developing and completing projects, and other activities that enhance learning. Thus, for a three-hour course, a typical student should expect to spend at least nine hours per week dedicated to the course.

Textbooks

Textbooks can now be ordered through a link on the [HST website](#). The Textbooks tab can be viewed on the navigation bar on any page of the website. Check the book list provided under the Textbooks tab (<http://hst.edu/students/textbook-services/>) for correct ISBN's and editions to insure correct ordering. A link provided there will take you to Amazon where you will only need to enter the ISBN to order your books.

Students with Disabilities

It is the policy of Harding University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to contact Steve McLeod, the Associate Dean, at 901-761-1353.

Library Resources

If you have not taken 5990 (Advanced Theological Research) or took it more than a year ago, go to the HST Web site (www.hst.edu) for information concerning library services to students. Under the "library" tab you will find a link to and instructions for searching the HST online catalog. There are also instructions for using the following databases available through the library: OCLC FirstSearch, EBSCOhost, Infotrac, and [Religious and Theological Abstracts](#). Contact the library for passwords to these databases. Also available are the research guides distributed in 5990. These annotated bibliographies list basic tools you will find helpful in your research.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty in all its forms is inconsistent with Christian faith and practice, and will result in penalties which could include a failing grade for the assignment, a failing grade for the course, dismissal from the course, and even dismissal from the school.

Canvas Online Learning System

In addition to the live video platform Zoom.us (see below), this course uses Harding's *Canvas Online Learning System*, which is accessed at <http://elearning.harding.edu>. If you have problems gaining access to Canvas, contact HU technical support (501) 279-4545. You will need your HST username and your password to log into Harding Pipeline. These are the same credentials you use to register for classes via Pipeline.

When you need to contact your professor via email, you may use the email system contained in the Canvas learning management system, although it is best to email directly to hsmith6@harding.edu.

Harding University gives each student an email address that also utilizes your user name. Many students use other email addresses as their preferred address. You can set your Harding G-mail account to forward messages to an alternative email address if you want; however, it is your responsibility to check your Harding email account regularly because this is the official Harding email address to which all Harding-related email will be sent.

HST LIVE via ZOOM

In addition to Canvas (see above), this HST-Live course is supported with the video platform Zoom.us. For new Zoom platform users, go to <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/200101697-Getting-Started> for helpful video tutorials about using this platform. The HST Live/Zoom Meeting ID for this course is **768 623 7003 (Passcode: 775547)**.

Students new to HST LIVE should watch the HST LIVE orientation video before the first day of class. The video can be found at <https://hst.edu/students/canvas-online-learning/>.

Equipment Requirements for LIVE Sections:

- Internet access using a latest version of a web browser such as Firefox (preferred).
- Latest version of Zoom software. This changes periodically without notification. If you already have Zoom, use that account. Basic Zoom.us is available free.
- Laptop or tablet with camera or desktop computer with camera.
- Ear buds with microphone - Apple MD827LL/A EarPods with Remote and Mic work well. Order on Amazon.com, <https://goo.gl/jLYfBG>.
- Additional monitor – Live video conferencing is best facilitated with two monitors.

Course Etiquette for HST Live:

- HST Live is a convenience for distance broadcast and attendance. In terms of responsibilities, it is no different than on-campus participation. Attendance is required just as if in residence on the Memphis campus. Full participation in the class is expected.
- Please make arrangements in your ministry context or employment to be in attendance for all calendared sessions (e.g., a staff meeting is not an excused absence). The same applies to arriving late or leaving early.
- Be seated in an environment that approximates a classroom setting (e.g., a chair at a desk in your office). Remain stationary at your computer during the class session except during breaks.
- Arrange for your HST Live environment to be distraction free. Please do not answer phone calls during class.
- Failure to observe these and related etiquette matters will result in grade reductions at the professor's sole discretion.

Class Participation

Participation and collaboration are essential components of scholarship and Christian community. I encourage you to volunteer answers and risk being wrong. Correction is a necessary component of learning. Participation includes:

- a. Attendance. The amount of contact you have with Hebrew will be directly proportional to your success in learning the language. It is crucial for you to be in class. Please avoid coming late and leaving early. Treat the LIVE classroom the same as you would an on-campus classroom as far as attire and etiquette.

Students are required to attend at least one of the extra one-hour homework/review meetings each week that are led by the class tutor. Times are to be determined.

- b. Preparation. Please come to class with all homework and reading assignments completed. I do not expect you to get all the homework exercises correct, but I do expect a thorough, good-faith effort. Be prepared to read the text smoothly (this takes practice).
- c. Vocabulary Cards
You are required to *make vocabulary flash cards*. Be creative with your vocabulary studies. Practice studying “in the gaps” by using down time during the day for flash cards.

GRADING SCALE

A = 90-100 B = 80-89 C = 70-79 D = 60-69 F = < 60

PROPOSED SCHEDULE

“Proposed” because we may move faster or slower, depending on the actual workload. You should attempt to stay a lesson ahead of the proposed schedule. If we have extra time, I reserve the right to press on ahead of the originally planned schedule. You should prepare the chapters *before* class. You are expected to have worked through the **first two lessons** on your own before the first class.

Week 1 (Aug 15) – Introduction; Lessons 1-3

Before class: Read *LBH* 1-2, watch videos, and do exercises 1A, 1B, and 2 in workbook; memorize the consonants (names of each letter in correct order); memorize vowels (names, symbols, and sounds)

During class: Introductions; Review lessons 1-2; Introduce lesson 3

Homework for next week:

1. Watch video for *LBH* 3
2. Do exercises 3A and 3B
3. Learn chapter 4 vocabulary, p. 81 in Workbook (make flashcards)
4. Take Quiz 1: Vocab 4; Lessons 1-2

Week 2 (Aug 22)

Review lesson 3

Introduce lesson 4 – Gender and Number, Definite Article and Conjunction

Homework:

1. Exercises 4A and 4B
2. Chapter 4 translation (pp. 81-84 in the Workbook)
3. Take Quiz 2: Vocab 4; Lessons 1-3

Week 3 (Aug 29)

Review lesson 4

Introduce lesson 5 – Vowel Changes in Hebrew Nouns

Homework:

1. Exercise 5
2. Learn chapter 6 vocabulary (85)
3. Take Quiz 3: Vocab 4-6; Lessons 1-4

Week 4 (Sept 5)

Review lesson 5

Introduce lesson 6 – Noun and Adjective Function

Homework:

1. Chapter 6 translation (85-88)
2. Learn chapter 7 vocabulary (89)
3. Take Quiz 4: Vocab 4-7; Lessons 1-5

Week 5 (Sept 12)

Review lesson 6

Introduce lesson 7 – Constructs, Interrogatives, Prepositions, and Interrogatives

Homework:

1. Exercise 7
2. Chapter 7 translation (90-95)
3. Learn chapter 8 vocabulary (97)
4. Take Quiz 5: Vocab 4-8; Lessons 1-6

Week 6 (Sept 19)

Review lesson 7

Introduce lesson 8 – Pronominal Suffixes and Review of Definiteness

Homework:

1. Exercise 8
2. Chapter 8 translation (97-101)
3. Learn chapters 9-10 vocab (103)
4. Take Quiz 6: Vocab 4-10; Lessons 1-7

Week 7 (Sept 26)

Review lesson 8

Introduce lessons 9-10 – Learning to Read Intuitively: Common Patterns in Hebrew Nouns; Numbers

Homework:

1. Chapter 9-10 translation (103-110)
2. Learn chapters 11-12 vocab (111)
3. Take Quiz 7: Vocab 4-12; Lessons 1-8

Week 8 (Oct 3)

Review lessons 9-10

Introduce lessons 11-12 – Introduction to Hebrew Verbs; Vowel Changes in Verbs

Homework:

1. Chapter 11-12 translation (111-115)
2. Learn chapter 13 vocab (117)

(Midterm Covering Lessons 1-10, vocab through chapter 12 – Take Oct 4-8 with proctor)

Oct 10 – STUDY WEEK

Genesis Oral Readings with Professor Smith

Week 9 (Oct 17)

Review lessons 11-12

Introduce lesson 13 – *Qal* Perfects

Homework:

1. Exercise 13 verb practice sheet (37)
2. Chapter 13 translation (117-124)
3. Learn chapter 14 vocab (125)
4. Take Quiz 8: Vocab 4-14; Lessons 1-12

Week 10 (Oct 24)

Review lesson 13

Introduce lesson 14 – *Qal* Imperfects

Homework:

1. Exercise 14 verb practice sheet (39)
2. Chapter 14 translation (125-131)
3. Learn chapter 15 vocab (133)
4. Take Quiz 9: Vocab 4-15; Lessons 1-13

Week 11 (Oct 31)

Review lesson 14

Introduce lesson 15 – *Qal* Volitionals

Homework:

1. Exercise 15 verb practice sheet (41)
2. Chapter 15 translation (133-140)
3. Learn chapter 16 vocab (141)
4. Take Quiz 10: Vocab 4-16; Lessons 1-14

Week 12 (Nov 7)

Review lesson 15

Introduce lesson 16 – *Qal* Participles and Infinitives

Homework:

1. Exercise 16 verb practice sheet (43)
2. Chapter 16 translation (141-148)
3. Learn chapter 17 vocab (149)
4. Take Quiz 11: Vocab 4-17; Lessons 1-15

Week 13 (Nov 14)

Review lesson 16

Introduce lesson 17 – *Qal Waw* Consecutives

Homework:

1. Chapter 17 translation (150-159)
2. Learn chapter 18 vocab (161)
3. Take Quiz 12: Vocab 4-18; Lessons 1-16

Nov 21 – Thanksgiving Break

Week 14 (Nov 28)

Review lesson 17

Deuteronomy Oral Readings

Week 15 (Dec 5) – Final

EXPLANATION OF OLD TESTAMENT CURRICULUM AT HST

The Old Testament curriculum is designed so that students have opportunities to study most of the Hebrew Bible in the M.Div. and M.A. in OT degrees.

M.Div. students will graduate with *at least*:

- a comprehensive understanding of OT content (OT Survey or proficiency exam)
- an awareness and appreciation for critical and theological approaches to reading the OT (Adv Intro to OT)
- having studied the Pentateuch (Adv Intro to OT)
- having studied either the writings in Wisdom Literature or the prophets in Isaiah
- a useful ability in reading the bible in Hebrew (Hebrew I and II)

In addition, the M.Div. curriculum includes elective hours for students to:

- take the other English based text class (Isaiah or Wisdom Literature) not already taken for the OT text requirement
- take a third semester of Hebrew (Hebrew Readings), which qualifies students for Hebrew Poetry
- take Hebrew Poetry, the climactic course in the Old Testament offerings
- take Old Testament World or Old Testament Theology as a general elective

5000 Survey of the Old Testament

This class is designed to familiarize students with the general content of the Old Testament Scriptures and significant themes of each Old Testament book. Successful completion of this class meets the requirement for the English Bible exam.

Students should take this class if they want a graduate overview of the entire Old Testament. The majority of the reading is the Old Testament. Some critical issues will be introduced, but the focus is on the content and theology of each of the biblical books. Compare this description with Advanced Intro to OT.

5001 Advanced Introduction to the Old Testament

This course introduces critical and theological approaches to the Old Testament through the study of the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, known as the Pentateuch or Torah. The class involves readings and discussion of critical issues, such as the formation of the Hebrew Bible, biblical historiography, and ancient Near Eastern backgrounds, and theological themes, such as creation, covenant, and holiness. This broader focus on the message of the Hebrew Bible is grounded in close readings of particular Pentateuchal texts.

If you want a class that will cover the entire Old Testament and will require you to read the Old Testament itself at length, please take Survey of the Old Testament.

5010 Old Testament World

A selective study of history, cultures, languages, literatures, and religions of the ancient Near East from 3000 B.C. to the time of Alexander that provides background for understanding ancient Israel and emergent Judaism as well as for interpreting biblical text.

5030 Old Testament Theology

A study of current approaches to understanding the message of the Old Testament. Selected themes and passages will be considered in light of their contribution to the theology of the Old Testament and its meaning for the modern world.

5060 Wisdom Literature

A study of biblical Wisdom literature — Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job — in light of its ancient Near Eastern and canonical contexts. The course seeks to identify the central themes and theological perspectives of Wisdom literature and to understand what “wisdom” means in various literary settings.

5082 Isaiah

A study of the text, background, and message of Isaiah. The class also engages the issues of prophecy, scribalism, and the religious use of the book of Isaiah in ancient Israel.

5090, 5091 Beginning Hebrew I and II

These two courses introduce the vocabulary and grammar of biblical Hebrew. Students who pass this class should be prepared to read narrative portions of the Hebrew Bible with supplementary use of the Hebrew lexicon.

5100 Readings in the Hebrew Old Testament

This course offers the opportunity to read narrative portions of the Masoretic Text (Hebrew Bible), expand Hebrew vocabulary, and learn the nuances of Hebrew syntax. Texts covered include Ruth, Exodus 32-34, and 1 Kings 16-19.

5130 Hebrew Poetry

A study of the poetry of the Hebrew Bible, with special attention to Psalms. In addition to a focus on the form and function of biblical verse, the class addresses the historical background and theological themes of particular Hebrew poems. This class requires 5100 Readings in the Hebrew OT. It counts as a text class.