



HARDING SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

5100 Hebrew Readings Syllabus

Fall 2023: August 14 – December 8, Tuesdays 8:15-10:55

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Welcome to Hebrew Readings! This semester as we read the Hebrew Bible we will encounter God, joining a reluctant, recalcitrant preacher, an overwhelmed (and underwhelming) community of faith, and a faithful but weary prophet, in their own encounters with the God of Jacob. The close reading of scripture, which language learning and translation demand, is both the demand and reward of this course. To that end, memorizing vocabulary, conjugating and parsing verbs, and studying syntax, grammar, and textual issues become spiritual disciplines which open anew encounters with God.

כִּי יִדְעָתִי כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי חַיִּים וְרַחוּם אֶרְךָ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְנָתַם עַל־הַרְעָה:

Jonah 4:2b

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, but also because there is value in reading large sections of narrative for thematic purposes.
2. To increase students' knowledge of Hebrew vocabulary, parsing, semantics, and syntax in order to facilitate reading of biblical texts.
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.
4. To learn to use lexicons and other tools for translation and interpretation.

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

5. To develop the spiritual discipline of studying biblical languages. Do not lose sight of what you are reading – an ancient and authoritative book, a witness to God’s work among God’s people.

TEXTBOOKS: REQUIRED

Clines, D. J. A. *The Concise Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Sheffield, Phoenix Press, 2009.

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

Landes, George M. *Building Your Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary: Learning Words by Frequency and Cognate*. SBL Resources for Biblical Study 41. Atlanta: SBL, 2001.

Tucker, W. Dennis, Jr. *Jonah: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*. Revised and Expanded Edition. Waco: Baylor University, 2018.

TEXTBOOKS: RECOMMENDED

Chisholm, Robert. B. *A Workbook for Intermediate Hebrew: Grammar, Exegesis, and Commentary on Jonah and Ruth*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006.

Youngblood, Kevin J. *Jonah: God’s Scandalous Mercy*. (Second Edition.) Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament: A Discourse Analysis of the Hebrew Bible. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2019.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Quizzes** (20%) – There will be a quiz each week that students will take on their own Wed-Fri except for when we have an exam. I will count your 10 highest quiz grades. See the schedule for specifics.
Each quiz will include:
 - a. **Vocabulary** – All vocab will be selected from Landes (note the occurrence limitations on the schedule below) and will be **cumulative**. You need to memorize the gloss for each verb in each *binyan*. Although I encourage you to learn the gender of nouns (put it on your flashcards), I will not ask for noun gender on the quizzes.
 - b. **Parsing** – I will ask you to parse verbs, including weak verbs and verbs with suffixes.
2. **Exams** (70%) – There will be three exams (see schedule for dates and contents). In addition to the material from quizzes, I will ask you to produce strong verb forms of קטל on the exams. The final is comprehensive, but the translation/parsing of biblical texts will emphasize 1 Kings 17-19. The first and second exams are worth 20% and the final is worth 30%. Distance students will need to arrange for proctors.
3. **Participation and Performance** (10%) – A major part of our shared class time will be dedicated to vocalization, translation, parsing, and discussion of grammar of the assigned biblical text. I will be tracking your performance each class. I do not expect perfection, but I expect that prior to class you will *orally rehearse the verses* and prepare to translate and parse *without notes*. If you are not prepared, it will not only hurt your grade, but will

also diminish the value of our time together. You may also be asked to prepare some interpretive observations, especially in Jonah from your reading in Tucker.

A good oral reading of the Bible is available at <https://www.torahclass.com/audio-bible-in-hebrew>.

GRADING SCALE

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

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: doden@harding.edu

Cell Phone Number: (215) 285-1796

Office Phone Number: (501) 279-4889

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 it regularly.

Note that my office is located on the main campus of Harding University in Searcy, AR, and I will be teaching this course from Searcy via Zoom. Any students in Searcy are welcome to join me in person during the course meetings.

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 doden@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 **9012750468**.

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.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE

Week 1 (Aug 15)

Read Landes 7-39

Prepare to read Jonah 1:1-10 together

Quiz 1: Landes #1-4 (30 times and up), #72-78 (50 times and up)

Week 2 (Aug 22)

Jonah 1

Quiz 2: Landes #5-6 (30 times and up), #79-81 (50 times and up); Parsing strong verbs

Week 3 (Aug 29)

Jonah 2

Quiz 3: Landes #7-8 (30 times and up), #53-56 (50 times and up); Parsing strong verbs

Week 4 (Sept 5)

Jonah 3

Quiz 4: Landes #9-10 (30 times and up), #57-60 (50 times and up);
Parsing strong verbs + suffixes

Week 5 (Sept 12)

Jonah 4

Quiz 5: Landes #11-13 (30 times and up), #31-33 (50 times and up)
Parsing of guttural verbs

Week 6 (Sept 19)

Exam:

1. Jonah 1-4
2. Vocab Landes #1-14 (30 times and up); #31-35; 53-60; 72-81 (50 times and up)
3. Production of קטל (*Qal, Piel, Niphal, Hiphil*)
4. Parsing strong verbs (+ suffixes); guttural verbs

Week 7 (Sept 26)

Exodus 19

Quiz 6: Landes #15-16 (30 times and up), #36-39 (50 times and up)
Parsing of III-*aleph*, and III-*he* verbs

Week 8 (Oct 3)

Exodus 20

Quiz 7: Landes #17-18 (30 times and up), #40-43 (50 times and up)
Parsing of I-*nun* and I-*aleph* verbs

October 10 – Study Week

Week 9 (Oct 17)

Exodus 32:1-24

Quiz 8: Landes #19-20 (30 times and up), #44-46 (50 times and up)
Parsing of I-*waw/yod* verbs

Week 10 (Oct 24)

Exam:

1. Exodus 19-20; 32:1-24
2. Vocab Landes #1-22 (30 times and up); #31-51; 53-60; 72-81 (50 times and up)
3. Parsing strong verbs (+ suffixes), guttural, III-*aleph*, III-*he*, I-*nun*, I-*aleph*, I-*waw/yod*, and II-*waw/yod* (hollow) verbs

Week 11 (Oct 31)

1 Kings 17

Quiz 9: Landes #23-24 (30 times and up)
Parsing of geminate verbs

Week 12 (Nov 7)

1 Kings 18 (vv. 1-19ish)

Quiz 10: Landes #25-26 (30 times and up)
Parsing of all weak verbs and verbs with suffixes

Week 13 (Nov 14)

1 Kings 18 continued

Quiz 11: Landes #27-28 (30 times and up)
Parsing of all weak verbs and verbs with suffixes (again)

Nov 21 – Thanksgiving Break

Week 14 (Nov 28)

1 Kings 19

Quiz 12: Review all vocab and parsing (nothing new)

Week 15 (Dec 5) – Final Exam

1/3 Vocab

1/3 Parsing and Production

1/3 Translation of texts we have done this semester with special emphasis on 1 Kings 17-19

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 19-20, 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.