

OTS 5501-5502: Biblical Hebrew I-II
ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Fall 2020: September 3 - December 17, 2020

Spring 2021: January 14 - May 6, 2021

Thurs., 8:30– 11:30 a.m.

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(Email is best means of contact, due to working from home)

I. Course Descriptions

OTS 5501 Biblical Hebrew, First Semester

Here the learner will begin to experience first-hand the message of scripture, as expressed in the language and culture of ancient Israel. This course will lay a foundation of linguistic and exegetical skills.

OTS 5502 Biblical Hebrew, Second Semester (Prerequisite: OTS 5501)

This course builds on the linguistic and exegetical skills learned in the first semester of Biblical Hebrew as we read more extended segments of scripture and explore pivotal nuances of expression often bypassed in translations.

The format of these courses involves weekly self-study of online video lectures, supported by weekly class meetings.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

This course format consistently meets the same quality, assessment, learning outcomes, and requirements of the traditional face-to-face semester offering of this course. For fall 2020, the sessions for this class may be offered 100% face-to-face in a physical classroom (with remote access for pre-scheduled students) 100% face-to-face virtually using technologies such as Zoom or Collaborate, as a combination of face-to-face sessions and digital activities/lectures (virtually or in-person), or as a combination of any of these elements. In the event of extended disruptions of normal classroom activities due to the pandemic, the format for this course may be modified to utilize 100% face-to-face virtual/digital classroom sessions.

As a result of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate critical and faithful interpretation and responsible use of Scripture in the Old Testament by understanding its message at the level of the original language.
- 2-6. Not assessed in this course.

Congratulations on enrolling in Biblical Hebrew. Here are some of the reasons I believe this course is important for you and your future ministry:

- God's message revealed in scripture is **foundational** for our life in Christ and our ministry.

- A significant portion of your **personal spiritual health** and your **public ministry** will rise out of reading, understanding, and explaining God’s Word.
- As a person **entrusted with leadership** and care of others in the church, you need to be solidly grounded in your ability to hear God’s message **firsthand**, not relying solely on others to tell you what it means.
- A significant percentage the Bible’s message **cannot pass through the “translation grid”** from Hebrew into English, even in the best and most modern versions. This loss holds true for any work of literature originating in a foreign language.
- The loss is accentuated when the **distance between language families** is greater (such as the rather large distance separating Hebrew in its Semitic language family from English in its Indo-European language family).
- Message lost in translation grows even more with **works of poetry**. *Roughly two-thirds of the Hebrew Bible was written in poetry* (including sermons of the prophets as well as books such as Psalms).
- What is lost in translation? Elements of **emphases, emotions, theme-links, allusions, subtle turns, and assonance** can be seriously muted or lost altogether when left to translation. *Conversely, this means that when we are able to read the Bible in its original language, we will have a **much easier** time detecting the main points, the forceful points, and the subtle points of the biblical message.*
- If any literary work merits our investment in original-language study in order recover what has been “lost in translation,” **the Bible merits this investment**.
- In addition, with a basic knowledge of Hebrew you will be able to read and take advantage of insights offered in the best Bible commentaries as well. Without a grasp of Hebrew, those insights will remain closed, even in an English commentary.

You are making a wise decision in taking this this course at this point in your life:

- It will **never be easier** to study a biblical language than now, during seminary.
- By learning Hebrew at this point, **your entire remaining ministry** and any remaining studies during seminary can be enriched by deeper biblical insights.

Note: This syllabus maps out two (2) semesters of Biblical Hebrew. We will invest the first two-thirds of the course mastering basic grammar and vocabulary, including regular brief readings from the Hebrew Bible. For the last third of the course we will focus on reading more connected portions of the Hebrew Bible, and learn practical skills for using these skills in ministry.

Advance Preparation:

The best way to begin learning Hebrew is to **take the pressure off** by obtaining a copy of the *Hebrew Out Loud* tutorial CD (together with handout) from the ATS Bookstore *3-4 weeks before class begins*. (If Bookstore is out of stock, please contact Paul Overland poverlan@ashland.edu so we can get a copy to you right away.) Successful students spend 15-20 hours, a little bit each day, over those 3-4 weeks at their computer learning to sound out Hebrew syllables. The CD is formatted for IBM-pc compatible computers (for Macs, please use a PC-emulator). You may use the ATS computer lab; bring a headset.

You may find it helpful to read Unit 0 of *Learning Biblical Hebrew Interactively* while studying the *Hebrew Out Loud* tutorial. Unit 0 of *LBHI* contains material similar to *Hebrew Out Loud*, but in greater detail. You do not need to understand the finer points of *LBHI* Unit 0 prior to class, only the

material similar to what is found on *Hebrew Out Loud* (letter sounds, letter names, sounding out Hebrew words, numbers, and pronouns).

A non-scoring quiz over *Hebrew Out Loud* will be given the first day of class so you can demonstrate how much you have already learned.

Course Format and Schedule Note:

The basic lecture content will be provided by multiple weekly video clips which students will study before the weekly class meeting. This may be done individually or in small groups at the student's initiative. The videos are available at:

<http://www.learningbiblicalhebrewinteractively.com/Student>

These videos will walk you through the textbook, explaining grammar and vocabulary, one segment at a time. You may pause and review the material, learning at your own pace. Each week students will bring to class completed assignments, based on the video-learning. Face-to-face class time will be spent primarily in answering questions and in reinforcement activities.

III. Course Requirements

A. Required Textbook(s) and Supplies

Kittel, R., et al. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1987. ISBN 3-438-05218-0 (larger size) or ISBN 3-438-05219-9 (smaller size). This contains the critical apparatus that helps us with problematic passages. (If you prefer, you may purchase instead a digital version of the Hebrew Bible that includes these critical notes. This resource would be 'in addition' to the standard Biblical Languages package of resources.) *Not needed until Second Semester.*

Ktav Publishing. *Machberet*. (This is an inexpensive blank Hebrew note-booklet, resembling a stapled "blue book" examination booklet). 36pp. Paper. *Please purchase two (2) of these small booklets.*

Biblical Languages Library (Logos Bible Software, Bellingham, WA). *Consult professor before purchasing* to optimize potential discount for this required textbook collection. You will not need this till December.

Overland, Paul. *Hebrew Out Loud: Computer-Assisted Vocalization Acquisition*. Rev. ed. CD ROM. Ashland, OH: HOLES Publishing, 2004. Be sure to obtain both the CD and the printed handout. Available only through Ashland University or Seminary Bookstore or from Paul Overland (poverlan@ashland.edu).

_____. *Learning Biblical Hebrew Interactively: Student Edition*. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, revised 2016, vols. 1-2. *Take care to obtain the revised 2016 edition.*

Vol. 1 ISBN 978-1-910928-12-7 (hbk), ISBN 978-1-910928-13-4 (pbk)

Vol. 2 ISBN 978-1-910928-14-1 (hbk), ISBN 978-1-910928-15-8 (pbk)

_____. *Millim: Words for Conversation in the Biblical Hebrew Classroom*. Wilmore, KY: GlossaHouse, 2016. ISBN 978-1-942697-35-0 (spiral bound).

B. Attendance

According to the *Student Handbook*, attendance at all class sessions is expected, unless the professor has been notified in advance and has approved the absence. Students should be on time and should stay through the duration of all classes. Any student missing more than six class hours (2 weeks) will be required to do additional work, receive a lower grade, audit or withdraw from the class, or be penalized otherwise at the discretion of the professor.

The course must be completed in normal course time frame. Extensions and incompletes will not be given.

C. Assignments/Assessment of Student Learning

Item	Description	SLO	Portion of Grade for Fall Semester	Portion of Grade for Spring Semester
1. Weekly Exercises	Exercises will be assigned in preparation for each class session. They are due at the beginning of each class. Late submittals will not receive credit.	1	25%	10%
3. Weekly Quizzes	Quizzes will be given at the start of class each week. Generally these will be vocabulary quizzes (which are not eligible for make-up). Bible verse memorization quizzes will also be given, on occasion.	1	25%	20%
2. Assessments	Several section tests or assessments will be given. See class schedule.	1	40%	10%
5. Vocalization Fluency	Two vocalization quizzes will be given, one toward the middle and one toward the end of each semester, each worth 5%. There will be numerous opportunities for free feedback during the semester.	1	10%	10%
6. Verse Insight	Complete a brief verse insight assignment (see instructions at end of syllabus)	1	(none)	10%
7. Word Study	Complete a brief word study paper (see instructions at end of syllabus)	1	(none)	15%
8. Exegetical Paper	Complete a 6-8 page exegetical paper (see instructions at end of syllabus)	1	(none)	25%

D. Calculation of Grade and Connection of Learning Outcomes

Please see right columns in table above for calculation of grade. All assignments pertain to SLO #1.

IV. Course Schedule*

This schedule is subject to revision.

Class	First Semester	Class Format	LBHI Textbook Modules	Due Today	
1	3-Sep	On Campus	Module 0.1-5	Non-scoring <i>Hebrew Out Loud</i> CD Quiz	
2	10-Sep	Live Online	Module 1.1-3	<i>Hebrew Out Loud</i> CD Quiz	
3	17-Sep	On Campus	2.1-3	Assessment 1	
4	24-Sep	Live Online	2.4-5		
5	1-Oct	On Campus	3.1-2	Assessment 2	
6	8-Oct	Live Online	3.3-4		
7	15-Oct	On Campus	4.1-2	Assessment 3	
8	22-Oct	Live Online	4.3-5		
9	29-Oct	On Campus	5.1-2	Assessment 4	
10	5-Nov	Live Online	5.3-6.1		
11	12-Nov	On Campus	6.2-3	Assessment 5	
12	19-Nov	Live Online	6.4-5		
13	26-Nov	On Campus	No Class: Thanksgiving Vacation		
	3-Dec	Live Online	Review		
14	10-Dec	On Campus	7.1-2	Group Project A	
15	17-Dec	Live Online	7.3-4	Assessment 6	
Class	Second Semester		LBHI Textbook Modules	Due Today	
1	14-Jan	☞	Review		
2	21-Jan	☞	7.5-8.1		
3	28-Jan	☞	8.2-9.1	Assessment 7	
4	4-Feb	☞	9.2-9.3	Assessment 8	
5	11-Feb	☞	9.4-5		
6	18-Feb	☞	10.1-2	Assessment 9	
7	25-Feb	☞	10.3-11.1		
8	4-Mar	☞	Review or Synagogue Pass Day*		
	11-Mar		Spring Break		
9	18-Mar	☞	11.2-3	10.3-11.1	Assessment 10
10	25-Mar	☞	Synagogue Bible Passage	11.2-3	Assessment 11

11	1-Apr	☞	No Class: Easter Weekend		
	8-Apr	☞	Jonah 1	✦	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exegetical Paper • Passage Selection • Word Study Selection
12	15-Apr	☞	Jonah 2	✦	Verse Insight Word Study
13	22-Apr	☞	Jonah 3	✦	Group Project B
14	29-Apr	☞	Jonah 4, Ps. 70	✦	Exegetical Paper
15	6-May	☞	Ps. 1, Student Presentation of Exegetical Papers	✦	

* We may arrange to attend a Saturday morning synagogue service in lieu of one week's class meeting. Also, an optional weekend retreat for concentrated study and consolidation may be offered (extra credit).

☞ Class format for Spring Semester is TBA.

✦ Vocabulary lists and quizzes will be supplied in these weeks, extending beyond the *LBHI* materials.

V. Recommendations for Lifelong Learning

- a. Begin reading a small portion of the Bible each day. Pick a book or a chapter you already are interested in. Begin with one or two verses. For this reading, do not feel you must translate every detail. Simply begin to read.
- b. Enroll in a 7000-level course studying a single book of the Bible. At this level you will be encouraged to advance your Hebrew language skills.
- c. Visit a synagogue service.
- d. Occasionally memorize a favorite verse in Hebrew.
- e. Integrate (in reasonable doses) the study of the Hebrew text of personal devotional readings, sermon and / or Bible Study preparations.
- f. Find a small group of friends and teach them to vocalize Hebrew using *Hebrew Out Loud*.
- g. Lead a group of interested friends through the basic skills of Hebrew nouns, adjectives, and simple verb forms by using *LBHI*, vol. 1, with the web-based videos as your online instructor. Continue with vol. 2 with interested members.
- h. Visit Israel. Being in the land will stimulate your interest in the language. While you are there, consider taking a brief "historical geography" course at a school such as Jerusalem University College.
- i. Participate in an archaeological excavation in Israel.

VIII. Seminary Guidelines

A. ATS Academic Integrity Policy

Ashland Theological Seminary expects each student to uphold the Seminary's core value of academic excellence by contributing to an environment that is both challenging and supportive. In such an environment a student will neither seek nor offer improper assistance. All students have an obligation to be forthright in their academic endeavors and to respect ethical standards. The work that one submits for academic evaluation must be one's own, unless an instructor expressly permits certain types of collaboration. Academic integrity

requires that each student will use one's own capabilities to achieve one's fullest potential and will neither offer nor accept aid that is not in keeping with regularly accepted standards of academic integrity. Failure to conform to this conduct shall constitute academic dishonesty. The full Academic Integrity Policy statement may be found in the *Student Handbook*.

B. Ashland Multiliteracy Center for Writing, Speaking, And Digital Communication

The Ashland Multiliteracy Center Service can help you brainstorm, draft, and revise your writing assignments in your graduate Seminary classes. Masters and doctoral qualified Consultants can advise you online or in person.

To schedule an appointment, visit [AshlandMultiliteracy Center](https://ashland.mywconline.com/) (abbreviated AMuLit Center) (<https://ashland.mywconline.com/>). Or you may go to (<https://www.ashland.edu/administration/graduate-online-adult-center-academic-support/resources-students/graduate-writing-consultation>) and scroll down to “For online appointments”.

C. Accessibility Resources and Accommodations

It is Ashland University's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on a disability, please contact the Student Accessibility Center at 419-289-5904, or send an email to dservices@ashland.edu. The Student Accessibility Center office and the course instructor will work together in order to establish accommodations and to meet your learning needs.

D. ATS Grading Scale

Grade	Quality	Percent	Description
A	4.0	97-100	Superior achievement of course objectives, diligence and originality, high degree of freedom from error, outstanding evidence of ability to utilize course knowledge, initiative expressed in preparing and completing assignments, positive contributions verbalized in class.
A-	3.7	92-96	
B+	3.3	89-91	
B	3.0	86-88	Good work submitted, commendable achievement of course objectives, some aspects of the course met with excellence, substantial evidence of ability to utilize course material, positive contributions verbalized in class, consistency and thoroughness of work completed.
B-	2.7	83-85	
C+	2.3	80-82	
C	2.0	77-79	Acceptable work completed, satisfactory achievement of course

			objectives, demonstrating at least some ability to utilize course knowledge, satisfactory class contribution.
C-	1.7	74-76	
D+	1.3	71-73	
D	1.0	68-70	Passing but minimal work, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.
D-	0.7	65-67	
F	0	Below 65	Unacceptable work resulting in failure to receive class credit, inadequacy of work submitted or of performance and attendance in class.

IX. Selected Bibliography, References, and Resources

(Several of these may have been mentioned earlier in syllabus.)

Hebrew Bibles and Aids

Brown, A. Philip, II, and Bryan W. Smith. *A Reader's Hebrew Bible*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2008. ISBN: 0310269741 or 9780310269748. This edition presents the entire Hebrew text (without critical apparatus), and footnotes the meaning of all words occurring less than 100 times in the Bible.

JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh: Pocket Edition. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Jewish Publication Society, 2003 (through University of Nebraska Press). ISBN: 978-0-8276-0766-8. This edition presents Hebrew in one column, English in other column.

Scott, W. R. *A Simplified Guide to the BHS*, 3rd ed. Berkeley, CA: Bibla Press, 1987.

Tanach Simanim (pocket edition). Nanuet, New York: Feldheim, 2006. (This edition of the Hebrew Bible is printed with special notations which aid pronunciation by distinguishing between features such as vocal and silent shewa vowels, qamets and qamets hatuf vowels. No ISBN. www.feldheim.com, "Tanach Simanim Pocket.")

Wonnenberger, Reinhard. *Understanding BHS: A Manual for the Users of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Subsidia Biblica, 8. Rome: Biblical Institute, 1984.

Würthwein, Ernst. *The Text of the Old Testament*. Trans. Erroll F. Rhodes. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979.

Grammars

Kautsch, E. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1910 and reprints.

Silzer, Peter J., and Thomas J. Finley. *How Biblical Languages Work: A Student's Guide to Learning Hebrew and Greek*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2004.

Tov, Emanuel. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.

Waltke, B. K., and M. P. O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990.

Lexica, Concordances

Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, repr. 1995. ISBN 1-56563-206-0. (Note: Logos Bible Software Original Languages Library contains this, full text.)

Even-Shoshan, A. *A New Concordance of the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1989. (Note: Logos Bible Software Original Languages Library enables you to design and execute more sophisticated Hebrew concordance searches than was possible with paper resources such as Even-Shoshan.)

Halladay, William. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament; Based Upon the Lexical Work of Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971. ISBN 0-8028-3413-2. (Note: Logos Bible Software Original Languages Library contains this, full text.)

Theological Dictionaries

Botterweck, G. Johannes. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren. Translated by John T. Willis. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1974-c1995.

Brown, Colin, general editor. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975-78.

Jenni, Ernst, and Claus Westermann. *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Trans. Mark E. Biddle. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1997.

VanGemeren, Willem A., gen. ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.

Vine, W. E. *An Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*. Ed. F.F. Bruce. Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell, 1978.

X. Additional Instructions for Word Study and Exegetical Paper

All papers should follow acceptable research style, be double-spaced, 12 point font. Footnotes may be in-text or at bottom of page. Include bibliography.

A. Exegetical Study (Second Semester)

Complete a 6-8 page paper investigating a 4-6 continuous-verse passage from the Hebrew Bible, resulting in an exegetical study of the passage. Insights from Exegetical Paper will be presented in class.

Select from among the following psalms: Ps. 15, Ps. 43, or Ps. 127.

Exegetical Paper is due in class (ready to present) on Week 14 of Second Semester. Actual presentation will take place on Week 15.

Paper should include the following, each marked by a heading:

Heading	Description
1. Introduction (1/2 page)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What attracts you to this passage? b. Where does this passage fit within the Bible book from which it is drawn?
2. Literary Context (3-4 pages).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Present your own translation of the passage. Include Hebrew text spaced so there is room to write above-the-line wooden translation and below-the-line smooth translation. Please keep it legible. b. Shed light on interpretation of passage by drawing from knowledge of Hebrew syntax and lexicography. c. Give a logical outline of the biblical passage, using full sentences. See instructions and samples: http://personal.ashland.edu/poverlan/logical_outline/logical_outline_expl_eg.pdf
3. Historical Context (1 page)	What was the historical setting for the given passage? Do any expressions in the passage make more sense when viewed in the light of that era? What historical knowledge does the writer likely assume that the reader will be aware of?
4. Theological Context (1-2 pages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What is taught by this passage concerning God, humankind, and their interaction? b. What may have been the application for the original audience? c. What should be the application for a modern audience?
5. Conclusion (1/2 page)	Summarize how study of this passage has impacted you.

As noted above, all papers (Exegetical and Word Study) should follow acceptable research style, be double-spaced, 12 point font. Footnotes may be in-text or at bottom of page. Include bibliography. Aim for 6-8 resources (not counting Bibles and Brown Driver Briggs or *HALOT*). Try to include a journal article. In addition to clarity and accuracy, your grade will reflect whether or not you were stirred by the truths uncovered in the passage.

B. Word Study (Second Semester)

Complete a brief, 2-page report examining a Hebrew word **arising from the passage selected for Exegetical Paper**. PLEASE NOTE: to help me read your paper more easily, please quote Bible passages fully, rather than simply providing the citation. Your Word Study will be presented in class.

Write your **word-selection** on a sheet of paper and turn in on Week 8 of Second Semester, with Exegetical Paper selection.

The completed Word Study is due in class (ready to present) on Week 12 of Second Semester.

Word Study should include the following, marked in your paper by a heading.

Heading	Description
1. Introduction	Statement of word, proposed etymology, and basic meaning.
2. Summary of Range of Meaning.	Sketch the boundaries of meaning of the word, illustrating with brief Bible quotations. Here you will answer the question, "How widely do the different connotations of this term range?" Do not be exhaustive, indexing every occurrence. Rather seek representation from the most diverse usages of the term.
3. Illumination from Parallel Usages.	Collect the occurrences of this term (together with brief Bible quotations) which provide greatest illumination for the primary passage you are studying.
4. Conclusion: Summary of Enriched Meaning.	<p>As a result of this study, how would you amplify or enrich the selected word in the target passage (of your exegetical paper)? You may use a phrase or brief paragraph to replace / enrich the word in its biblical context. You may want to compare four or five Bible translations to see which seem to do the best job, based on your discoveries.</p> <p>Caution: this step is most frequently omitted or underdeveloped by students. It does not need to be long. But it does need to expand the original wording with phrase / paraphrase / paragraph to show that you grasp the wider connotation for this term in Hebrew. <i>Resist the temptation simply to repeat the translation for this word that you started with.</i></p> <p>Also, <i>do not simply give the enriched translation, alone.</i> Pour it back into the starting point verse (the verse in which the term appeared in the first place, taken from your Exegetical Paper passage.) In this manner the entire exegetical passage will be made more meaningful because you have enriched the meaning of one term found in that passage.</p>

Consult the following sample word study:

http://personal.ashland.edu/poverlan/literary_instr/wrd_stdy_holy.pdf

C. Verse Insight Study (Second Semester)

Conduct one Verse Insight Study as described below. It is due at the start of Week 12.

1. Ask a friend or a member of the ATS faculty / administrators if you may conduct a verse study as a gift to him / her. Ask that person to select a verse personally meaningful to him. You will complete the study and present it to him as a gift.

2. Begin by developing a basic translation the verse (include Hebrew text with rough translation above the Hebrew, smooth translation below the Hebrew). Include enough grammatical or parsing detail in your rough-translation-above to make it clear that you actually understand it in Hebrew (not simply drawing inferences from an English translation).
3. Examine the way in which it was composed in Hebrew:
 - a. Are there any particular words which reveal significant meaning often overlooked in translations?
 - b. Are there any emphatic expressions? Let this flavor come out in your translation.
 - c. Examine the aspect (tense) of verbs. What special flavor do these contribute, if any?
 - d. Summarize devotional impact which these insights may bring to you
4. Now translate the verse again, as much as possible incorporating these insights into your expanded translation. This will be a fairly free translation—rather like a paraphrase—but solidly grounded in the Hebrew insights you have uncovered.
5. Length: one or two pages, double spaced.
6. Resources: lexicon, commentary employing Hebrew (list as footnote).