



HEBREW EXEGESIS I

COURSE SYLLABUS

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1.0 Course Description

This two-semester course prepares the student for independent exegesis of the Hebrew text. It emphasizes techniques involved in the use of language tools, procedures in lexical word studies, and examination of grammatical and syntactical phenomena. Prerequisites: Hebrew Grammar I and II.

Course materials and assignments related to select Hebrew Bible texts include the study of the following subject areas relating to Hebrew exegesis:

Hebrew Exegesis I	Hebrew Exegesis II
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• principles of translation• syntactical analysis—Hebrew grammar and syntax• diagrammatical analysis• textual analysis—OT textual criticism• lexical analysis—Hebrew philology, semantics, and lexicography	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• literary analysis—OT literary devices, structure, and forms• ancient near eastern (hereafter, ANE) backgrounds (historical/political, social/cultural, geographical)• exposition

2.0 Course Rationale

Exegesis is the primary task of the student of biblical literature. It is best learned by being exercised. Classroom reading, homework assignments, and discussion of selected texts will provide an atmosphere for learning the specific principles involved in exegeting the Hebrew Scriptures.

3.0 Student Learning Outcomes

This research course will engage the student with the text of the Hebrew Bible. The learning outcomes for this course are as follows:

1. The student will identify and define key grammatical elements in his chosen text from the Hebrew Bible.
2. The student will translate his chosen text from the Hebrew text in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*.
3. The student will define and illustrate the principles of Hebrew exegesis in the treatment of his chosen text.
4. The student will produce a logical (block) diagram of his chosen text.
5. The student will interpret the *masorah parva* and the text critical apparatus of *BHS* within the context of his chosen text and will produce a preliminary text critical analysis of his chosen text.
6. The student will perform adequate lexical analysis of two key words in his chosen text.

4.0 Textbooks

4.1 Required Textbooks (*marks required reading)

- *Brotzman, Ellis R. *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994.
- *Chisholm, Robert B., Jr. *From Exegesis to Exposition: A Practical Guide to Using Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999.
- *Putnam, Frederic Clarke. *Hebrew Bible Insert: A Student's Guide*. 2nd edition. Quakertown, PA: Stylus Publishing, 2002.
- *Scott, William R. *A Simplified Guide to BHS: Critical Apparatus, Masora, Accents, Unusual Letters & Other Markings*. 4th edition. N. Richland Hills, TX: BIBAL Press, 2007.
- Koehler, Ludwig, and Walter Baumgartner. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. 2 volumes. Revised by Walter Baumgartner and Johann Jakob Stamm. Translated and edited by M. E. J. Richardson. New York: Brill, 1994–2000.
- Elliger, Karl, and W. Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. 5th edition. New York: American Bible Society, 1997.

4.2 Recommended Textbooks

- Arnold, Bill T., and John H. Choi. *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Holladay, William L. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988.
- Kaiser, Walter C., Jr. *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981.

Kelley, Page H., Daniel S. Mynatt, and Timothy G. Crawford. *The Masorah of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia: Introduction and Annotated Glossary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1998.

Long, Gary A. *Grammatical Concepts 101 for Biblical Hebrew: Learning Biblical Hebrew Grammatical Concepts through English Grammar*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002.

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

5.0 COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS*
1	Introduction: "Course Syllabus" (all) and "Study Notes," 1–5 Translation Principles and Practices: "Study Notes," 6–37	Read Chisholm, 7–18
2	Translation Principles and Practices (continued)	Read Chisholm, 19–29 Written Translation: Genesis 3:1–7 Choice of Text Due
3	Translation Principles and Practices (continued) Syntactical Analysis: "Study Notes," 38–62	Read Chisholm, 57–75 Written Translation: Genesis 3:8–16
4	Syntactical Analysis (continued)	Read Chisholm, 75–94 Written Translation: Genesis 3:17–24
5	Syntactical Analysis (continued)	Read Chisholm, 94–117
6	Syntactical Analysis (continued)	Read Chisholm, 119–42 Written Translation: 2 Samuel 8:1–15
7	Syntactical Analysis (continued) Diagrammatical Analysis: "Study Notes," 63–70	Read Chisholm, 142–86 Paper #1: Syntactical Analysis
8	Diagrammatical Analysis (continued)	Read Chisholm, 187–220
9	Diagrammatical Analysis (continued) Text Critical Analysis: "Study Notes," 71–77	Read Chisholm, 221–78 Read Brotzman, 17–62 Written Translation: Isaiah 42:1–10
10	Text Critical Analysis (continued)	Read Brotzman, 63–106 Paper #2: Diagrammatical Analysis
11	Text Critical Analysis (continued)	Read Brotzman, 107–32 Written Translation: Psalm 95
12	Text Critical Analysis (continued) Lexical Analysis: "Study Notes," 78–87	Read Brotzman, 133–70 Paper #3: Text Critical Analysis
14	Lexical Analysis (continued)	Paper #4: Lexical Analysis

* Syllabus reading assignments are recorded in the "Topic" column of this schedule.

6.0 Exegetical Papers

6.1 General

An exposition of a selected text of the HB will be produced by stages throughout the two semesters of this course. The student will be required to choose a text for this exposition and submit a written abstract (typed and double-spaced, but without footnotes or bibliography) in the second week of Hebrew Exegesis I. The abstract must:


- (1) identify the text,
- (2) specify at least one exegetical problem within the text,
- (3) indicate the theological or interpretative significance of the text, and
- (4) describe the expositional value of the text.

The student must choose one of the following texts for all papers in Hebrew Exegesis I and II:

Genesis 4:5–7
Leviticus 19:16–18
Joshua 1:6–8
Job 19:25–27
Psalm 33:6–9
Psalm 127:1–3
Proverbs 16:30–33
Ecclesiastes 3:9–11
Isaiah 1:18–20
Malachi 2:14–16

6.2 Paper Requirements

All papers (not including the abstract, above) must meet the following requirements:

- Instructions for each paper specify the page maximums.
- **Thesis format.** This includes internal headings, pagination, footnotes, introduction, conclusion, and bibliography. Please follow Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed., rev. by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, and University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). 
- The bibliographies must be formal. The bibliographies should be accumulative and unified in one listing. **Use bibliography entries in this syllabus as a guideline to style.**
 - **Paper #1** will contain only those sources pertinent to its area of exegetical analysis.
 - **Paper #2** will contain its own sources as well as the sources of Paper #1.
 - **Paper #3** will contain its own sources as well as the sources for Papers #1 and #2.

- **Paper #4** will contain its own sources as well as the sources for Papers #1, #2, and #3.
- **Every paper** must begin with a working (i.e., tentative or provisional) **translation** of the chosen text.

6.3 Specifics about Each Paper

6.3.1 Paper #1: Syntactical Analysis (see “Study Notes,” 78–102 [esp., 89–98] and grading sheet and abbreviations for grading comments in “Course Syllabus,” 17–19)

- 20 pages maximum—including separate pages as follows: title page, revised translation page, and bibliography page(s).
- Write a brief introduction (cp. “Study Notes,” 89).
- Identify (includes parsing of verbs, gender and number of nouns, and classification of all Hebrew words) and discuss the exegetical significance of the syntactical elements within the chosen text. What are the interpretative implications of the syntactical elements? Answer the question, “So what?” (See sample in “Study Notes,” 89–98.) Be certain to cover all of the syntactical issues discussed in the Syllabus. Instead of repeating information for identical forms or words, refer back to your first treatment.
- Write a brief summary or conclusion (cp. “Study Notes,” 98).
- Conclude with your **Bibliography** that contains all sources collated in alphabetical order (by author). At minimum, you must utilize and cite Chisholm, Putnam, *HALOT*, and your Hebrew Grammar I/II grammar textbook.

6.3.2 Paper #2: Diagrammatical Analysis (see “Study Notes,” 103–110 and grading sheet in “Course Syllabus,” 20)

- 6 pages maximum—including separate pages as follows: title page, revised translation page, and bibliography page(s).
- If necessary, arrange the diagram in landscape mode instead of portrait mode, but keep rest of the paper in portrait mode. To do this, insert section breaks before and after the diagram.
- You may use colors and shapes in producing the diagram—in order to highlight emphases, parallels, or repetitions.

6.3.3 Paper #3: Text Critical Analysis (see “Study Notes,” 111–117 and grading sheet in “Course Syllabus,” 21).

- 12 pages maximum—including separate pages as follows: title page, revised translation page, diagram page(s), and bibliography page(s).
- In chart form (see sample in “Study Notes,” 116–117), identify and translated all *masora parva* and all text critical apparatus entries for the verses **assigned by the professor upon receiving your synopsis for choice of text.**

- Write a **brief** set of preliminary observations regarding the exegetical significance of the textual variants **for your approved text**.

6.3.4 Paper #4: Lexical Analysis (see “Study Notes,” 118–27 and grading sheet in “Course Syllabus,” 22)

- 20 pages maximum—including separate pages as follows: title page, revised translation page, diagram page(s), and bibliography page(s).
- Select only 2 of the most significant key words utilized in your approved passage and perform context, lexicon, concordance, and theological dictionary research for each.
- Write a **brief** set of preliminary observations regarding the exegetical significance of each of the 2 word studies.

7.0 Translations

7.1 General Instructions

- **Do not employ an English translation as a “pony” to aid in translating the passage.** Work only with the Hebrew text and a lexicon (like Holladay, BDB, or *HALOT*).
- **Avoid utilizing computer programs providing parsings.**
- Excellence in translation involves the following factors:
 - **Accuracy**—consistently reflective of the underlying Hebrew text and its grammar.
 - **Clarity**—lack of ambiguity, redundancy, inconsistent tenses, and unidentifiable antecedents.
 - **Understandability**—simple, proper English without torturous grammar or vocabulary.
 - **Readability**—easily read aloud in public without creating any ambiguities, misunderstandings, or cultural *faux pas*.
 - **Contemporaneity**—avoid literal translations of Hebrew idioms, overly technical vocabulary, and slang expressions.
 - **Appeal**—attractive format reflecting paragraphing and literary genre (perhaps even literary devices).

7.2 Examples for Formatting (see below)

- Note that the first paragraph would normally be indented. The example on the following page is not indented only because that particular portion of the translation is actually a kind of heading in the text of Genesis 37.

Poetic Text Formatting**1** A Mikhtam of David.

Preserve me, O God, for I take refuge in You.

2 I said to the LORD, “You are my Lord;

I have no good besides You.”

3 As for the saints who are in the earth,

They are the majestic ones in whom is all my delight.

- Employ one of the following as the translation for יהוה: Yahweh or YHWH.
The use of “Lord” will always be assumed to represent אֲדֹנָי. “LORD” will not suffice, since the hearer cannot distinguish between “Lord” and “LORD.”
- Use italics to show words added to the English translation to make sense that are not in the Hebrew text nor indicated by Hebrew grammar. For example, וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לֹא־טוֹב הָיִיתָ הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ, So YHWH God said, “The man being alone is not good.” The copula (“is”) is not in the Hebrew text, but is demanded by the grammar, so it is not italicized. **Never use parentheses for supplying added words.**

The following page shows formatting for the translation of narrative texts.

Genesis 37:1–11

[1] Jacob eventually settled in the land of his father's sojournings, in the land of Canaan. [2] This is the history of Jacob:

Joseph was 17 years old. He was tending the flock with his brothers – he was a young man together with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives. *One day* Joseph brought a bad report about them to their father.

[3] Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons because he was a son of his old age so Israel had made a long-sleeved tunic for him. [4] Thus his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, so they hated him and were not able to speak peaceably with him. [5] Then Joseph had a dream and revealed it to his brothers. As a result, they hated him all the more. [6] So he said to them, "Listen to this dream I had! [7] We were about to bind sheaves in the midst of the field when my sheaf arose and even stood upright. Then your sheaves gathered around and proceeded to bow down to my sheaf."

[8] So his brothers asked him, "Will you really be king over us – if, indeed, you could rule us?" Thus they hated him all the more because of his dreams and his words.

[9] Then he had yet another dream and related it to his brothers. He said, "Look here, I have had a dream again. The sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me."

[10] Then he related it to his father and his brothers. But his father rebuked him and asked him, "What is this dream which you have had? Will I, your mother, and your brothers really come to bow down to you on the ground?" [11] Therefore, his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter *in mind*.

8.0 Bibliography

A PRELIMINARY BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR HEBREW EXEGETICAL METHOD

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