



HEBREW EXEGESIS II

COURSE SYLLABUS

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1.0 Course Description

This two-semester course (Hebrew Exegesis I and II) 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. This semester is Hebrew Exegesis 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 for Hebrew Exegesis II

Exegesis is the primary task of the student of biblical literature. It is best learned by being exercised. Classroom reading, assignments, and discussion of selected texts will

provide an atmosphere for learning the specific principles involved in exegeting the Hebrew Scriptures.

3.0 Course Objectives

The student should continue to be able to fulfill the objectives for Hebrew Exegesis II:

- to outline the methodology of Hebrew exegesis (HE);
- to present and explain the main principles of HE;
- to perform sound translation of selected passages of the Hebrew Bible (HB);
- to identify the basic elements of Hebrew syntax having the greatest impact on exegesis;
- to produce a logical (block) diagram of a text based upon its syntactical analysis;
- to describe the contribution of major textual sources to the textual criticism of the HB;
- to read and interpret the text critical apparatuses of *BHS* and *BHQ*;
- to identify the major principles for textual criticism of the HB;
- to translate and interpret the minor masora in the margins of *BHS*;
- to produce a preliminary text critical analysis of a HB text; and,
- to perform adequate lexical analysis of key Hebrew words and phrases.

As a result of taking Hebrew Exegesis II the student should be able to fulfill the following objectives:

- to identify and define the key literary forms of the HB;
- to identify, define, and discuss the exegetical significance of key literary devices in the HB;
- to discuss the role of ANE studies in the exegesis of the HB;
- to evaluate commentaries on the HB;
- to perform an accurate exegesis of selected passages from the HB; and,
- to prepare an exposition of a selected passage on the basis of exegetical results.

4.0 Textbooks

Required Textbooks

In addition to the textbooks required for Hebrew Exegesis I, the following textbooks are required:

Kaiser, Walter C., Jr. *Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament: A Guide for the Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003.

Sandy, D. Brent, and Ronald L. Giese, Jr., eds. *Cracking Old Testament Codes: A Guide to Interpreting the Literary Genres of the Old Testament*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995.

5.0 COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS*
1	Review of Hebrew Exegesis I	Memorize Psalm 19:15 (Hebrew) Read Chisholm, 149–69
2	Psalm 19 (continued from last semester)	Read Chisholm, 169–86
3	Literary Analysis: “Study Notes,” 1–42	Written Translation: Proverbs 8:1–11
4	Literary Analysis (continued)	Read Sandy & Giese, 1–27 Read Kaiser, 15–59
5	Literary Analysis (continued)	Read Sandy & Giese, 29–67 Paper #5: Literary Analysis
6	Contextual Analysis: “Study Notes,” 43–53	Read Chisholm, 187–220
7	Contextual Analysis (continued)	Read Sandy & Giese, 69–112 Written Translation: Daniel 12
8	Contextual Analysis (continued)	Read Kaiser, 63–119 Paper #6: Contextual Analysis: Biblical
9	Contextual Analysis (continued)	Read Sandy & Giese, 113–38 Written Translation: Leviticus 19:9–19
10	Contextual Analysis (continued)	Read Sandy & Giese, 139–96
11	Preparation for Exposition: “Study Notes,” 54–66	Read Sandy & Giese, 197–232 Read Chisholm, 221–78 Paper #7: Contextual Analysis: Extrabiblical
12	Preparation for Exposition (continued)	Read Sandy & Giese, 233–98
13	Preparation for Exposition (continued)	Read Kaiser, 121–78
14	Review	Paper #8: Exposition

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.

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.**
- **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 #5: Literary Analysis** (see “Study Notes,” 1–6).
- 6.3.2 **Paper #6: Contextual Analysis: Biblical** (see “Study Notes,” 1–6).
- 6.3.3 **Paper #7: Contextual Analysis: Extrabiblical** (see “Study Notes,” 1–6).
- 6.3.4 **Paper #8: Exposition** (see “Study Notes,” 1–6).

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 and p. 7)

- 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 texts must be formatted as poetry in poetic lines.** Example (using the NAU of Ps 16):



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: LORD, Yahweh, or YHWH. The use of “Lord” will always be assumed to represent אֲדֹנָי.
- 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 הִיּוֹת 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 provides an example of formatting for the translation of narrative.

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*.