

July 2011



COURSE SYLLABUS

Hebrew Exegesis I

(Seminary: **OLDT 0711**)

University College: **HEBR 2013**)

TYNDALE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE & SEMINARY

Department of Bible & Theology, Biblical Languages, University College, and

Department of Biblical Studies: Old Testament, Seminary

Fall 2011

Thursdays 1:00-3:50

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Office hours:

Tuesday 2:00-3:45; Wednesday 1:00-4:00 Thurs; 10:00-12:00.

I am usually available at these hours, but not always. If I have no appointments booked, I may not be in my office during these hours. Appointments may be arranged at other hours if need be. To book an appointment, please leave me your preferred day and time, and a possible second choice, and I will confirm with you. Please contact me via e-mail: jkessler@tyndale.ca. If e-mail is unavailable, please call 416-226-6620, ext. 6724.

If I am in my office, and the door is open, please feel free to check with me to see if I am available.

To access your course materials at the start of the course, please go to
<https://www.mytyndale.ca>

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

PREREQUISITES

University College: *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew I and II* (HEBR 1013 and HEBR 1023)

Seminary: *Interpreting and Applying the Biblical Text* (BIBL 0501)

Hebrew Grammar I and II (OLDT 0611 and 612)

DESCRIPTION/GENERAL OBJECTIVE

This course, and its continuation, OLDT 0712/HEBR 2023, are designed to provide the student with a foundational exegetical methodology for the interpretation of the Hebrew Bible, including the preparation of teaching and preaching materials. In order to achieve this goal, the course will explore matters relating to philology, semantics, syntax, poetics, genre, form, hermeneutics and historical-cultural background. The student will be introduced to foundational concepts both practical and theoretical in nature, which may be applied to the Hebrew text. More specifically this course will introduce students to the foundational exegetical, hermeneutical and theological issues in (a) Yahweh's covenant as understood in the Pentateuch, and its use as a theological foundation in the prophets, and (b) Biblical Hebrew Narrative as represented in 2 Samuel and Genesis.

II. SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Translate selected passages of Biblical Hebrew from the Pentateuch and Former and Latter Prophets with only the aid of a lexicon, at an average rate of one verse per ten minutes, or faster.
2. Identify the main and subordinate clauses, with their subjects, predicates, objects and modifiers, in a text of Biblical Hebrew prose.
3. Conduct a philological and syntactical analysis of a verse of Biblical Hebrew prose with the aid of a lexicon and syntax book at an average rate of one verse per hour, or faster.
4. Demonstrate the ability to research a historical-cultural feature of the Ancient Near East.
5. Articulate an understanding of the concept of covenant as presented in the Pentateuch, and identify how the concept of covenant is utilized in selected passages in the Prophets.
6. Demonstrate the ability to analyze the internal structure of a pericope of Biblical Hebrew.
7. Apply the technique of interpretive questioning to a passage (10-20 verses) of Biblical Hebrew prose in a way that successfully examines the central exegetical issues of the text.
8. Responsibly analyze and explain Hebrew word meanings.
9. Demonstrate a knowledge of some of the basic exegetical and hermeneutical considerations involved in Old Testament interpretation.
10. Understand and apply the syntactical categories studied, especially as it relates to verbal translation values and clausal relationships.
11. Identify key structural patterns in the Hebrew text.
12. Efficiently use lexicons, concordances, grammars, theological dictionaries and commentaries.
13. Demonstrate a basic understanding of the techniques, structure and hermeneutics of Hebrew narrative. Demonstrate the ability to elicit the theological underpinnings of a text of Biblical Hebrew prose and to communicate these theological concepts to a contemporary faith community.

14. Demonstrate an understanding of scholarly methodologies (source, redaction, and traditions analysis) and engage them critically and constructively in the exegesis of an OT prose text.
15. Bring the biblical texts studied into creative dialogue with one or several contemporary cultural contexts.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED TEXTS

Note: Purchase only the editions of Stuart, Hayes and Holladay, and Williams and Beckman indicated below. Do not use earlier versions of these works as we will be discussing them together in class.

1. Berlin, Adele. *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*, Winona Lake, Eisenbrauns, 1994.
2. Chisholm, Robert B. Jr. *From Exegesis to Exposition: A Practical Guide to Using Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998. Note: bring this book to each class session.
3. Hayes, John H., and Carl R. Holladay. *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*. 3rd ed. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007.

B. ADDITIONAL REQUIRED MATERIALS

1. ***It is highly recommended that students purchase Hebrew capable bible software and learn to use it. It will greatly aid in the completion of assignments, and will enable the student to keep using Hebrew long after graduation.***

Accordance for Mac and BibleWorks for PC are recommended. Be sure to obtain the Hebrew components (tagged BHS text, lexicon) when you purchase the software.

2. **The student is expected to own one of the following standard Hebrew and Aramaic lexicons, in paper format. Alternatively students may use the electronic version of *HALOT* (see below):**

Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (BDB)*. Oxford University Press or Hendriksen edition. Note: there is a shorter e-version of BDB available with some software packages. This is not adequate for the course.

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

Holladay, W. L. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971.

Koehler, L. and W. Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (HALOT), Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2001, or e-version available with Accordance software.

3. **The student is expected to own or have access to the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (BHS)*.** Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, c1997. Editio funditus renovata). *Students must translate from the print version of the BHS*, even if they also use the BHS text found in most Bible software.
4. **The student is also expected to own or have access to a Hebrew-capable concordance (i.e. able to search the occurrences of a Hebrew word).** Use of such software will be demonstrated in class.

Electronic tools;

Logos Bible Software
Bible Works
Accordance (for Mac)
Gramcord (for PC)

Print Tools

Wigram, George V. *The Englishman's Hebrew Concordance of the Old Testament: Coded with the Numbering System from Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. 3rd ed. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1996.

Lisowski, Gerhard, *Konkordanz zum Hebraischen Alten Testament*. Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1958.

5. **The student is expected to download the Hebrew Syntax handouts from the mytyndale.ca course page and bring them to class each week (paper or e-format).**
6. **The student is expected to bring Chisholm's *From Exegesis to Exposition*, Hayes and Holladay's *Biblical Exegesis* (and either Williams *Hebrew Syntax* or Waltke-O'Connor *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* if the student has purchased them) to each class.**
7. **The student is expected to bring a copy of the BHS Hebrew text of the Bible passage to be discussed that day (either the BHS itself or a photocopy—not a printout of the BHS from one of the software programmes).**
8. **In addition the student will frequently need to refer to her/his textbook from Introductory Hebrew (OLDT 0611-0162, or equivalent).**

C. ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT RESOURCES. Note: it is recommended that students who plan to use Hebrew in their ongoing study and ministry, and those taking OLDT 0712 (the continuation of this course) purchase some or all of the following texts.

1. Stuart, D. *Old Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. 4th ed. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2009. This work provides a good, albeit limited introduction to exegetical methodology. It contains a superb chapter on exegesis aids and resources. That chapter is worth the price of the book.
2. Williams, Ronald J., and John C. Beckman. *Williams' Hebrew Syntax*. 3rd ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007.

OR

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

These works provide a more detailed discussion of Hebrew Syntax than the one contained in Chisholm's *From Exegesis to Exposition*. Waltke-O'Connor is far more detailed than Williams. Serious students of Hebrew should purchase one or the other

3. Soulen, Richard N., and R. Kendall Soulen. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. 3rd ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. This book is an indispensable resource. It defines most of the technical terms students are likely to encounter in their reading of scholarly works in biblical studies.
4. Steck, Odil Hannes. *Old Testament Exegesis: A Guide to the Methodology*. 2nd ed, Resources for Biblical Study; Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1998. The standard critical work on OT exegesis. A must for those going on to do ThM, ThD and PhD work in OT.
5. Students may wish to purchase (in print or e version) one of the following theological/exegetical dictionaries.

Botterweck, G. Johannes, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. 12 vols. Grand Rapids, Mich; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2006.

Harris, R. Laird, Gleason Leonard Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. 2 vols. Chicago: Moody Press, 1980.

Jenni, Ernst, and Claus Westermann. *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*. 3 vols. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997.

VanGemeren, Willem. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*. 5 vols. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1997.

6. Students may wish to purchase (in print or e version) one of the following Bible dictionaries.

Alexander, T. Desmond, and David W. Baker. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2003.

Arnold, Bill T., and H. G. M. Williamson. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2005.

Freedman, David Noel. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

Freedman, David Noel. *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*. New edition. Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 2000.

Longman, Tremper, and Peter Enns. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings*. Downers Grove, Ill. Nottingham, England: IVP Academic; InterVarsity Press, 2008.

Sakenfeld, Katharine Doob. *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. 5 vols. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 2006.

D. SUMMARY OF COURSE GRADING

Assignment 1	10%
Assignment 2	10%
Assignment 3	10%
Assignment 4	20%
Assignment 5	10%
Weekly Translations and Readings	40%
Total grade =	100%

IV. COURSE STRUCTURE AND PROCEDURE

1. This course is designed to introduce the student to the art and science of OT exegesis. It consists of two foundational elements: (1) the weekly translations and reading assignments and (2) a series of exegetical assignments (largely related to Genesis 22). *Faithful completion of the weekly translations* will enable the student to attain speed and skill in translation, and make the use of Hebrew worthwhile for preaching, teaching and Bible study. *Diligent preparation of the assignments* will give the student a 'dry run' of the kind of exegetical techniques that can be used for the preparation of sermons and Bible studies, as well as for the academic study of the biblical text.
2. The weekly translations and readings for this course count for 40% of the grade. *Nothing could be easier than to "cheat one's self" by not making and taking the time to really do the translations, but rather relying on interlinear Bibles, analytical lexicons, or computer aids.* Such tools have their place, but nothing can replace the initial discipline of working with only the Hebrew Bible (note: all translations must be done from the BHS, see above) and a lexicon (BDB, Holladay, or HALOT, see above). This skill is to exegesis what scales are to music. As such, no interlinear Bibles or computer translation and parsing programmes are permitted in class or for translation work (except as indicated below). Analytical lexicons and computer programmes, parsing guides and linguistic keys may only be used *after* a reasonable attempt (5 min. minimum, 15 min. maximum!) to parse and translate the term using a standard lexicon.
3. The use of Armstrong, Busby, Carr, *A Reader's Hebrew English Lexicon*, 3 Vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988 is encouraged.
4. Submitting assignments on time is an essential component of this course, since discussion of returned assignments constitutes a very important part of the learning experience in the classroom. Consequently late assignments will be penalized at a rate of **3% per day**.
5. **Assignments may be submitted in class in hard copy, or up to 5 pm on the due date, or electronically via the mytyndale.ca class page, up to 11:59 pm on the due date.**

V. COURSE OUTLINE

This course contains two distinct components. Each class will be divided equally between them. The first component is the verse-by-verse reading of several Hebrew texts, with special attention to their philological, syntactical, structural, and theological dimensions. The second component consists of the development of exegetical skills and methodology. This will build upon that which the student has learned in BIBL 101: Biblical Interpretation. This section will cover the following areas.

STAGE 1: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

- A. PHILOLOGICAL ANALYSIS. UNDERSTANDING WORDS AND THEIR MEANINGS.
- B. SYNTACTICAL ANALYSIS. UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORDS AND WORD GROUPINGS.
- C. DEVELOPING AN INTERPRETIVE FRAMEWORK.

STAGE 2: INTERMEDIATE SKILLS

- A. ANALYZING THE STRUCTURAL AND LITERARY ASPECTS OF THE BIBLICAL TEXTS.
- B. UNDERSTANDING THE THEOLOGICAL TRADITIONS AND THE GROWTH OF THE BIBLICAL LITERATURE.
- C. ASCERTAINING THE THEOLOGICAL PURPOSE(S) OF A BIBLICAL TEXT.
- D. UNDERSTANDING THE CONVENTIONS OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE.

STAGE 3: MOVING FROM TEXT TO OUR WORLD: APPROPRIATION

Note: There will be no class Nov 17.

Week 1 Sept 15

Course Introduction. Syllabus. Tools for OT Exegesis. Why knowing and using Hebrew is important. Hebrew Grammar Review (1). Translation technique. How to translate a sentence. Introduction to Interpretive Questioning. Terms and features of text. Terms: Philology: words and their meanings (1). Type of words needing clarification.

Week 2 Sept 22

Discussion of assigned translation and related syntactical issues. Hebrew Grammar Review (2). Overview of the Interpretive Process. Key issue in exegetical methodology: peshat/sensus literalis/historical interpretations versus literalistic, more-than-literal, and non-historical readings. Grammatical-Historical method. Interpretive Framework. Introduction to OT "Covenant" Theology.

Week 3 Sept 29

Discussion of assigned translation and related syntactical issues. Introduction to Textual Criticism. Delimitation of Textual Units (1). Historical Critical Methods. Prophecy and Covenant (1).

Week 4 Oct 6

Discussion of assigned translation and related syntactical issues. Delimitation of Textual Units (2). Terms: Philology: words and their meanings (2): semantic fields, nuance.

Assignment 1 due.

Week 5 Oct 13

Discussion of assigned translation and related syntactical issues. Form and Structure. Compositional Relationships. Volitive sequences.

Week 6 Oct 20. Assignment 2 due.

Discussion of assigned translation and related syntactical issues. Figures of Speech (1). Prophecy and Covenant (2).

Week 7 Oct 27.

Discussion of assigned translation and related syntactical issues. Figures of Speech (2). Introduction to Narratology. Determining the Theological Purpose of Text.

Week 8 Nov 3. Assignment 3 due.

Discussion of assigned translation and related syntactical issues. Further Discussion of Narratology.

Week 9 Nov 10.

Discussion of assigned translation and related syntactical issues. Discerning the Internal Structure of a Textual Unit.

Week 10 Nov 17. NO CLASS

Week 11 Nov 24. Assignment 4 due

Discussion of assigned translation and related syntactical issues. How OT books are written. Understanding the Compositional History of a Text. Determining the Theological Rooting of a Text. Theological Streams (1)

Week 12 Dec 1

Discussion of assigned translation and related syntactical issues. Determining the Theological Rooting of a Text. Theological Streams (2). Moving from the text to contemporary life: appropriation (1).

Week 13 Dec 8. Assignment 5 due.

Discussion of assigned translation and related syntactical issues. Moving from the text to contemporary life: appropriation (2).

VI. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Weekly Translations and Readings (40%).

For the weeks 2-13 of the course (omitting Nov 17), Bible translations and readings will be assigned. The readings will be relatively short. The focus will be upon the translations. For each assigned passage the student must: (1) parse all the verbal forms, (2) provide a smooth translation using only a lexicon; and (3) ask at least 10 interpretive questions.

Furthermore, a copy of the student's translation work and interpretive questions must be handed in at the beginning of each class. Late translations and readings can be 'made up' until the last day of the course (see marking scheme below). See the course schedule for specific translation passages, readings and dates.

Reading and Translation Marking Scheme

1. Each student will fill out the *translation and reading summary* sheet found on the mytyndale course page, and submit it on the last day of class. No translation and reading work may be made up after this date.
2. For each week the student will indicate whether: the translation and parsing has been completed, the interpretive questions have been completed on time and the reading has been completed on time, or have been made up later.
3. If all readings, translations, parsing, and interpretive questions are completed *on time* the student will receive an A.
4. If all translations, parsing, and interpretive questions are completed *on time* and the readings are made up by the end of the course the student will receive an A-.
4. If all translations, parsing, interpretive questions *and readings* are completed *by the end of the course* the student will receive a B+.
5. For each week that the readings, translation and parsing, and questions have not been completed by the end of the course the student will receive the following grades:
 - 1 Incomplete = B
 - 2 Incomplete = B-
 - 3 Incomplete = C
 - 4 Incomplete = C-
 - 5 Incomplete = D
 - 6 or more incomplete = F

2. Written Assignments (60%)

Assignments may be submitted either electronically (via mytyndale.ca) in pdf format only, or in hard copy.

NOTE: Please indicate your Tyndale mailbox number on all assignments.

Assignment #1	INTERPRETIVE FRAMEWORK – THE ABRAHAM CYCLE: HISTORICAL, LITERARY, AND THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS	10%
	Due: Oct 6	

See instructions in the file entitled “711.Assignment1.instructions” on the mytyndale course page.

Assignment #2 GENESIS 22:1-19: LITERARY AND STRUCTURAL OVERVIEW
and TERM/FEATURE CHART WITH INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS
Due: Oct 20. **10%**

Draw up a term chart and structural overview for Genesis 22:1-19. Approximately 15 terms/features should be selected. In the appropriate columns identify significant features of the text, and ask insightful and pertinent interpretive questions. Be sure to leave adequate space for questions related to each term.

Additional instructions will be given in class and in the file entitled 711.Assignment2.instructions.

Assignment #3 WORD STUDY - Prepare a "Word Study" of the [key terms in Zech 4:6](#). [See additional instruction sheet for details.](#)
Due: Nov 3 **15%**

Assignment #4 GENESIS 22:1-19 TERM/FEATURE CHART WITH INTERPRETIVE ANSWERS.
Due: Nov 24 **20%**

Select 10 of the most relevant terms that you chose in your earlier term chart (or substitute new terms, and ask questions about them). On your term chart, respond to the questions you asked. The sources for your answers should include (i) concordances, (ii) Hebrew Grammar and Syntax books, (iii) commentaries (iv) specialized verbal and thematic studies (e.g. TDOT, ABD, IDB, etc.), (v) Bible dictionaries and encyclopaedias, especially with reference to historical-cultural issues and (vi) specialized articles (see ATLA Database). Your questions should take into account a variety of aspects of the text: word meanings, syntactical questions, historical-cultural issues, redactional issues, narratological matters, and theological issues. Take as much space as you require to answer your questions. However, be selective and spend your energy on the most critical and relevant questions. Be sure to indicate the source of your answers on the term chart. Use author and page citations (e.g. Hamilton, p. 56) in the chart and include a full bibliography at the end.

Assignment #5 GENESIS 22:1-19 SERMON/BIBLE STUDY OUTLINE AND APPROPRIATION.
Due: Dec 8. **10%**

Present a Bible study or sermon *outline* based on Genesis 22:1-19. The study/sermon may take any form but must contain the following elements:

1. A summary explanation of the important exegetical and theological issues in it. Point form may be used
2. A statement of the theological perspectives, values, virtues, and call to personal engagement that can legitimately be derived from the passage.
3. An explanation of how an understanding of the passage's meaning leads to these theological perspectives, values, virtues and call to personal engagement.
4. Suggested contemporary re-contextualizations of the passage's theological perspectives, values, virtues and call to personal engagement.

This paper should be no more than 5 pages in length. It need not contain a bibliography or footnotes. However it must suggest contemporary appropriations/applications of the text that are based on and rooted in the exegetical work done in the student's term chart answers. *Papers which simply suggest "off the cuff" ways in which the passage might be applied that are not rooted in the careful exegesis of the text do not meet the requirements of this assignment.*

VII. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Students should consult the current *Academic Calendar* for academic policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System. The Academic Calendar is posted at <http://www.tyndale.ca/registrar/calendar>. An excerpt is attached with this syllabus for easy reference.

VIII. LATE GRADING POLICY

- A.** Much of our class discussion will involve an analysis of work done for the assignments. It is therefore vitally important that assignments be submitted on time. Late assignments are assessed at 3% per day to a maximum of 3 weeks, after which the paper receives a zero.

Extensions are granted only in exceptional circumstances. These include illness (a medical attestation is required), severe illness or death in the family, etc. Requests for extensions must be submitted to the course professor in writing.

Extensions will not be granted for family or mission trips, ministry responsibilities, heavy workload in other courses, computer or printer problems, etc.

Remember: it is generally more advantageous to submit an acceptable paper on time, than a better paper one week late.

Try to follow the '24 hour rule' i.e. have a final version of your work ready 24 hours before it is due.

- B. Dead Date Policy:** According to the Tyndale Academic policy, no papers may be submitted later than the last day of final exam week. Any requests for extensions beyond this time must be made directly to the Registrar. The professor will accept no materials after this date.

IX. READING AND TRANSLATION SCHEDULE

See the document Reading and Translation Schedule on the mytyndale.ca class page