“And let us be sure of this, we will not long preserve the gospel without the languages. The languages are the sheath in which this sword of the Spirit is contained; they are the casket in which this jewel is enshrined... If through our neglect we let the languages go (which God forbid!), we shall ... lose the gospel ... - Martin Luther

“We may impress one another for a while by dropping the name of the latest book we’ve read, but secondhand food will not sustain and deepen our people’s faith and holiness.”

I. Introduction:

The above quotes illustrate a very important point. These quotes illustrate the utter importance of learning the Biblical languages in order to be an effective communicator of the Bible. While they don’t specifically say it, language acquisition can take significant effort and we, therefore, need to be continually reminded of its importance and look for the proper motivation.

II. Course Description

The course is designed as a thorough introduction to Biblical Hebrew, with an emphasis on grammar and vocabulary in the first term with the goal of translating Biblical Hebrew prose toward the end of the second term. Students who put in the time and effort will be pleasantly surprised to find that they will be reading Biblical Hebrew prose with the help of a lexicon before the end of the roughly seven or eight short months of an academic year. One of the major goals is to make sure students can easily transition into the exegesis courses and productively continue their study of the Bible in the original language.

III. Required Textbooks


[There is also a less expensive paperback edition, published by American Bible Society, 1997.]

IV. Helpful aids

1. Our course will have a website on Sakai where you will find videos and handouts created by Professor Donna Petter the director of the Hebrew Language program at GCTS. You will also find lecture slides and other helpful handouts.

2. Accompanying CD Rom and website:
   https://www.teknia.com/basicsofbiblicalhebrew/resources

3. A website developed by a former GCTS and Harvard student John Beckman, which contains a complete course with lectures, practice quizzes, vocabulary mnemonics, and much more all based on our grammar. http://www.hebrewsyntax.org/bbh2new/


V. Course Requirements

1. Quizzes: 40 %
   a. Quizzes will be given on a nearly weekly basis and cover the material from the previous week usually corresponding to roughly two or three chapters in our grammar (BBH). Quizzes may include, but will not necessarily be limited to, the following elements: generation of Hebrew forms and paradigms, translation of Hebrew sentences into English, translation of English sentences into Hebrew (minimal), grammatical questions, and vocabulary (both Hebrew-to-English and English-to-Hebrew as to be specified in class).
      i. You may be required to take some of the quizzes outside of class time in the library
   b. Replacement quiz: Each student will have the opportunity to drop their lowest quiz grade and replace that grade with a makeup quiz to be taken at the end of the semester. It will be to your advantage not to miss a quiz, but if you have to miss a quiz you may drop and replace that grade of a 0, but only that grade. The replacement quiz will be a compilation of all the quizzes from the semester, with a selection of questions taken directly from those quizzes.
2. **Exams: 45%**
   a. **Midterm 20%**
      i. The midterm will be taken in class. The exam will be about 1.5 hours and cover all the material studied to this point. BBH chs. 1-10
   b. **Final 25%**
      i. The final examination will be a comprehensive three-hour exam given during the exam week in December.

3. **Attendance, Homework, Preparation, Memorization 15%**
   a. **Class attendance** is required; failure to attend class regularly will impact your course grade. It is understood that unforeseen circumstances do arise during the course of the semester. As long as there is a legitimate reason (e.g. illness, family emergency…) and this is communicated to the instructor in a timely fashion no penalty will ensue. However, it must be emphasized that this should happen only rarely if at all. If this does happen, you are still responsible for the material and the homework missed.
      i. **Tardiness**—being habitually late to class will also impact your attendance grade. More importantly I will address any logistical matters such as what is going to be on the upcoming quiz at the beginning of class. You will not want to miss this important information.
   b. **Homework**: Effective language learning takes discipline and consistency. It is expected that students will be prepared each class with the homework completed and able to provide their answers in class. If a student’s homework is not completed it will negatively impact the attendance/homework grade for the semester. As part of the homework, the students will be expected to practice reading the assignments out loud and be able to replicate this in class.
      i. All homework assignments are due by the beginning of the class period under which they are listed in the course schedule below.
      ii. As part of the homework for each chapter students will be expected to memorize the vocabulary. Memorization of vocabulary will be tested as part of the weekly quizzes. Do not neglect the vocabulary; it is impossible to learn a language without acquiring knowledge of the basic words of that language.
   c. **Memorization**: During the course of the semester you will be asked to memorize one short passage to be reproduced on the midterm and final exam. For the midterm you will need to write out Genesis 22:1 and for the final you will need to write out Genesis 22:1-2 both from memory. This will be included as part of your homework and attendance grade for the semester, it will be 5% of the grade.

**Minimum Grade To Pass**
Per the Gordon-Conwell Hebrew language policy in order to pass Hebrew I and continue with Hebrew II in the spring semester you must earn a grade of C- (70% or higher) in the class. This policy is designed to benefit the student. If your Hebrew ability is not up to the level of a C- it would be nearly impossible for you to effectively continue with the exegesis courses. Make sure you are able to put in the necessary time to at the very least achieve this grade.

VI. Course Schedule and Assignments

***Before our first meeting on Sept. 13th ***

Pre-Lecture assignment: We will begin the course with chapter 3 in the grammar after a review of the first two chapters. This means you must prepare the first two chapters prior to our first class meeting along with completing the exercises in the workbook for these chapters (see below).

*For chapter 1 make sure you read and study the advanced exercises, I will be using the pronunciation here rather than what you find in the grammar so make the necessary substitutions.

What you are expected to know by our first meeting: 1) You need to be able to write and recite the Hebrew alphabet in order from right to left as well as be able to identify each letter by its name (e.g. Alef, Bet) out of order. 2) You also need to know how to pronounce each letter by giving the English letter associated with the pronunciation as found on page 1 of the grammar. 3) For chapter 2 you must be able to write the vowels (with a consonant), identify the name, class and length of the vowel - see the summary chart on pg. 15 of the grammar. 4) Also, make sure you know the letters that have a final form 5) as well as the group of consonants that take a dagesh lene. 6) Lastly, make sure you know the group of consonants referred to as gutturals.

Our first quiz to be taken in the first week of class will test this material. For practice quizzes see the website mentioned above. [http://www.hebrewsyntax.org/bbh2new/](http://www.hebrewsyntax.org/bbh2new/). The quizzes in the ch. 1 and ch. 2 sections found on this website will test the same material as the quizzes to be taken in class. You will not be tested on the transliteration in these chapters.

Working through Chs. 1 & 2

- Prior to starting chs. 1 & 2 make sure you have read the syllabus.
- Next, read Chapter 1.
- Next, listen to the sound bite by Professor Petter on Chapter 1 in Sakai. (This is absolutely necessary and will give you the chance to work on your pronunciation with an instructor).
- Before starting the homework make sure you have learned the material in Ch. 1 and make sure you can accomplish everything listed in the summary section as well as the advanced information.
- Finally, Do Exercises in the workbook for Ch. 1 - pgs. 1-4 all exercises.

- Review Ch. 1
- Start Ch.2 by reading the chapter.
Next, Listen to Chapter 2 presented by Professor Petter in Sakai and make sure you understand everything listed in the summary section of the grammar.
After you have a good understanding of the chapter do the exercises in the workbook for Ch. 2. Pgs. 7-9 (do only 1-10 of the second exercise on pg. 8)

You may also want to listen to the lectures found on the website listed under helpful aids # 3.

**Week 1**
**Sept. 13 (Tues.)**
Homework Due: Workbook exercises Ch.1 all exercises & Ch. 2 pp. 7-9 (only 1-10 of the second exercise on p. 8)
Course Overview
Review:
Chapter 1 – The Alphabet – Including the Advanced Exercises
Chapter 2 – The Vowels 2.1-2.12
Lecture: BBH Chapter 3 Syllabification

**Sept. 15 (Thurs.)**
**Quiz:** The Alphabet and the Vowels
Homework due: Exercises in Ch. 3 pp. 11-13 all exercises
Lecture: BBH Chapter 4 Hebrew Nouns

**Week 2**
**Sept. 20 (Tues.)**
**Quiz:** Syllabification
Homework Due: Exercises in Ch. 4;
1-25 on pgs. 15-16; 1-10 pg. 16; 1-10 pg 17;
Advanced Exercises part 1 pg 17-18 #’s 2, 6, 10, 14, 18
Advanced Exercises part 2 pg 19 #’s 1-8.
Lecture: BBH Chapter 5 Definite Article
BBH Chapter 6 Prepositions

**Sept. 22 (Thurs.)**
Homework due: Exercises in Ch. 5 pg. 23 only;
Exercises in Ch. 6 pg. 25-28 all exercises except, Composition exercises do only 2-6, 9-10;
Bible translation only 1-5.
Lecture: BBH Chapter 7 Adjectives

**Week 3**
**Sept. 27 (Tues.)**
**Quiz:** The Definite Article and Prepositions
Homework due: Chapter 7 Exercises; Parsing 1-20; Translation 1-15; Bible Translation 1-14
Lecture: BBH 8 Pronouns
Sept. 29 (Thurs.)
Homework Due: Exercises in 8;
Translation Part 1, 5-10; Part 2, 1-10; Part 3, 1-5; Bible Translations, 1-11
Lecture: BBH 9 - Pronominal Suffixes on Nouns and Prepositions

Week 4
Oct. 4 (Tues.)
Quiz: Inflecting and using Adjectives, Pronouns, and vocabulary
Homework Due: Exercises in 9:
Part 1, 1-15; Part 2 odd only; Part 3, odd only; Bible translations 3, 5
Lecture: BBH 10 Hebrew Construct Chain

Oct. 6 (Thurs.)
Homework Due: Exercises in 10:
Translation 1-24; Bible translations 1-20;
Construct nouns: Parts 1 and 2, (know how to put nouns into their construct form and the rules that govern this).
Lecture: BBH 10 Hebrew Construct Chain Continued and Review

Week 5 Oct 10-14 First Reading Week
(Review & Chs. 11 & 12 Homework – see below)

Week 6
Oct. 18 (Tues.)
Review

Oct. 20 (Thurs.)
Midterm

Week 7
Oct. 25 (Tues.)
Chapter 11 Read Only: No homework due from this chapter except to learn the vocabulary
Homework Due: Exercises in 12: 12a 1-15; Translation 1-12; 12b pp. 63-66
read
Lecture: BBH 13 Qal Perfect strong verb

Oct. 27 (Thurs.)
Homework Due: Exercises in 13: Parsing 1-10; Translation 1-10; Bible Translations 1-2, 4-6; Inflecting 1-10
Lecture BBH 14 Qal Perfect Weak Verbs

**Week 8**
Nov. 1 (Tues.)
**Quiz:** Qal perfect strong verb and vocabulary to date
Homework Due: Exercises in 14a:
Parsing 1-20; Translation odd only; Bible translations 1, 3, 4, 7
Exercises in 14b:
Parsing 1-15; Bible translations 1, 4, 7
Lecture: BBH 15 Qal Imperfect Strong Verb

Nov. 3 (Thurs.)
Homework due. Exercises in 15:
Parsing 1-15; Translation odd only; Bible Translation 1-5, 9
Inflecting 1-15
Lecture: BBH 16 Qal Imperfect Weak Verbs

**Week 9** Nov. 7-11 Second Reading Week

**Week 10**
Nov. 15 (Tues.)
**Quiz:** Qal perfect strong and weak, Qal imperfect strong (some weak) and vocabulary
Homework Due: Exercises in 16a:
Parsing 1-10; Translations 1-10; Bible Translations 8-10;
Exercises in 16b:
Parsing 1-10; Translation 1-5; Bible translations 7, 9, 10
Exercises in 16c: Parsing 1-15; Bible translations 1, 3-6
Lecture: BBH 16 Continued 16 D, E, F

Nov. 17 (Thurs.)
Homework Due: Exercises in 16d:
Page 111 all parsing; Page 112-113 all parsing; Bible translations 2, 5
Exercises in 16e: Page 115 all parsing; Bible Translations 1-5
Lecture: BBH 17 Vav Consecutive (Consecutive Preterite)

**Week 11**
Nov. 22 (Tues.)
**Quiz:** Parsing Qal Perfect and Imperfect, Strong and Weak
Homework Due: Exercises in 17:
Parsing 1-10 on p. 125; Bible Translations 1-4, 7, 10, 11, 13; Parsing 1-10 pg 130; Bible translations 2, 3, 9 pgs. 131-132
Lecture: BBH 18 Volitionals and BBH 19 Pronominal suffixes on Verbs
Nov. 26 (Thurs.)
No Class Thanksgiving Day.

**Week 12**

Nov. 29 (Tues.)
**Quiz:** Parsing, especially Imperatives, Vav Consecutives and other volitionals
Homework Due: Exercises in 18a;
Parsing 1-19 pg. 135-136; Translations 1-9 pg 136; Bible translations 4, 5, 10 pgs. 137-139; Exercises in 18b; Parsing 1-10 p 141; Translation 1-3, 5, 6 pg 142; Bible Translations 2, 6, 12; Exercises in 18c: Parsing 1-15 pp 149-150; Bible Translations 2, 3, 7 pg 152-153.
Lecture: BBH 20 Qal Infinitive Construct & BBH 21 Qal Infinitive Absolute

Dec. 1 (Thurs.)
Homework Due: Exercises in 20:
Parsing 1-30 pg. 163-164; Translations 3-6, 13, 14 pg. 165-166; Bible Translations 5, 8, 15; Exercises in 21: Parsing 1-23 pg 173-174; Translations 1-5 pg 174; Bible Translations 1, 2, 3
Lecture: BBH 22 Qal Participle.

**Week 13**

Dec. 6 (Tues.)
**Quiz:** Parsing
Homework Due: Exercises in 22:
Parsing 1-25 pg 179-180; Translation 1-6 pg 180-181; Bible Translations 1, 3, 6 pg 181-182
Lecture: Open Day

Dec. 8 (Thurs.)
Review

Exam Week Dec. 12-16

Final Exam TBD: (Probably Tuesday Dec 13th 9-12AM or Thurs. Dec. 15th)

**Note** I reserve the right to add or subtract anything on the syllabus as I deem appropriate to meet the goals of the course and in cases where the students will benefit. Any changes will be clearly specified to the class in a timely fashion.