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OT 501 Survey of Biblical Hebrew

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OT 501 Survey of Biblical Hebrew Spring 2003

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1. Course description

This course introduces students to Biblical Hebrew for purposes of exegetical work in pastoral ministry. Particular emphasis is given to the fundamentals of Biblical Hebrew and the basics of the exegetical process for pastoral use.

2. Course objectives

Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

- 2.1. analyze Biblical Hebrew words through the use of elementary phonology,
- 2.2. determine the range of grammatical functions and choose the most appropriate one(s) by observing word formation (morphology),
- 2.3. interpret the interrelations of Hebrew words (syntax),
- 2.4. identify the use and significance of basic grammatical constructions.
- 2.5. benefit from the use of standard lexica and reference grammars.

3. Course procedures and requirements

3.1. A critical element of language study is attendance. Each student is allowed one unexcused absence without penalty. Additional unexcused absences will result in the loss of one grade increment in the final grade (i.e. from a B to a B-).

3.2. At the end of each lesson, students will receive an assignment to complete before the next session. Full completion of assignments is essential in order to obtain the learning goals of this course. Students should be prepared to discuss the assigned exercises by the beginning of each class period. The instructor will collect the assignments after each session in order to determine that they are being completed in a timely fashion. Feel free to collaborate with others on these assignments, but be sure that all work submitted is your own.

3.3 Late assignments will be deducted 25% for each day late, and will be returned with no comments. Late assignments will not be accepted after four days. The timely completion of all assignments is a requirement for passing this course.

3.5 In the event of an emergency, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor as soon as possible. Absences will be considered unexcused if no notice is given. Make-up assignment and/or quizzes will also not be allowed without timely notice. There is no matter too big or too small – please contact the instructor as soon as possible in any event.

3.6. There will be weekly quizzes during the term and one exam. The quizzes will include vocabulary, listed in Seow, as well as certain grammatical issues covered in class.

3.7. The final exam consists of three parts – a section of vocabulary, a short translation from the Old Testament, and a take home portion, which will involve application of exegetical skills learned throughout the term to a specific passage. The due date of the final exam will be announced. Late exams will be penalized ½ letter grade (from B to B minus) for each day that it is late.

4. Course texts

4.1. Required texts

Elliger, K., and W. Rudolph. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967-77.

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

Scott, William R. *A Simplified Guide to BHS*. Berkeley, Calif.: BIBAL, 1987.

Seow, C. L. *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*. Rev. ed. Nashville: Abingdon, 1995.

4.2. Recommended texts

Armstrong, Terry, Douglas Busby, and Cyril Carr. *A Reader's Hebrew-English Lexicon of the Old Testament: Four Volumes in One*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1989.

Arnold, Bill T. and John H. Choi. *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Forthcoming. (Course Packet in Bookstore).

BibleWorks 5.0. Hermenueitika, Big Fork, Mont. (available in the Library at ATS for those who do not purchase the software.)

Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Oxford, 1907; reprint, Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1979.

Koehler, Ludwig and Walter Baumgartner. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Study Edition. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Landes, George. *Building Your Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary: Learning Words by Frequency and Cognate*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001.

A note about these resources: BDB (*A Hebrew and English Lexicon...*), while a bit outdated, remains the best English language lexicon for the student. If you are interested in continuing Hebrew studies, this is a resource you should not do without; thus, for this course, it will be more than an adequate substitute for Holladay.

BibleWorks and *A Reader's Lexicon* are very helpful resources. However, as with all resources, you should take care in using them. Keep in mind that exegesis, and a meticulous and diligent interpretation of the text involves more than copying grammatical

information from these or other sources. It involves a close reading and analysis of the text and its syntax, which no resource except a firm knowledge of the fundamentals of Hebrew grammar will provide.

A Note About English Grammar:

Throughout the course, we will be making reference to grammatical terminology. If you are unfamiliar with the terms of grammar in English, you may want to take some time to get acquainted with various terms and definitions. Various grammar guides are available at the bookstore. There is also a comprehensive web site prepared by University College in London – www.ucl.ac.uk/internet-grammar.

5. Student evaluation

5.1. Class attendance, preparation, and participation	10%
5.2. Assignments and Exercises	25%
5.3. Quizzes	35%
5.4. Final examination	30%

6. Schedule

A copy of the class schedule will be distributed to students on the first day of the semester.