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# OT 501 Concise Hebrew

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**OT501 – Concise Hebrew**  
**Asbury Theological Seminary - Florida**

**Spring 2001**

**Instructor: Brian D. Russell**

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**Office Hours: TBA**

*"Apply the whole of the text to yourself; apply the whole of yourself to the text." – J. Wesley*

**Course Description**

This course introduces students to Biblical Hebrew for purposes of exegetical work in ministry. Particular emphasis is given to inductive learning of the fundamentals of Biblical Hebrew, the use of standard exegetical tools and the Bible study software available.

**Course Objectives**

Upon successful (C or better) completion of OT 501, each student will be competent:

- 1) To pronounce Biblical Hebrew and transliterate Hebrew words into English characters;
- 2) To recognize the most frequently occurring vocabulary forms (see attached hand-out);
- 3) To analyze Hebrew word formations (Nouns, Verbs, Prepositions, etc.);
- 4) To interpret the relationships between Hebrew words (syntax);
- 5) To use Hebrew lexical tools in ministry (lexicons, reference grammars, and *BibleWorks*);
- 6) To establish the semantic range of a word in its context (word study);
- 7) To discern the differences between commentaries on the Hebrew Scriptures;
- 8) To describe the essential differences between Hebrew prose and poetry.

This course will not teach you to translate Biblical Hebrew. Students interested in a full grammatical introduction to the language of the Old Testament will need to follow OT501 with OT502. Those interested in OT502 need to alert the instructor *early* in the semester so that the course may be added to the schedule of classes.

**Required Texts**

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

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

Chisholm, Robert. *From Exegesis to Exposition*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998. (Chisholm)

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

**Bible Works 4.0 (BW)**

BW will be used extensively throughout the course as an aid in the identification of Hebrew grammatical forms as well as for its powerful lexical search capabilities. It is available for your use in the library. If you have the resources, you may consider purchasing your own copy. BW will be

used in all language, IBS, and exegetical courses at ATS-FL. More importantly, it will prove beneficial for your present and future ministry.

### **First Class Account**

It is imperative that you open a First Class Account at the Seminary. A folder for this class to which only you as members of OT501 have access is open for your use. A discussion/message board will be available for use throughout the semester in order to facilitate greater dialogue between students and between you and me. Questions, comments, and hints are always welcome on this site.

Additionally, the folder marked "Intranet" contains another folder dubbed "Students." In the Student folder, you can find all of the Powerpoint slides as well as class hand-outs and worksheets. Lecture slides will be available one week prior to class.

### **On Reserve Shelf**

All of the above texts as well as the following are on reserve:

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

E. Kautzsch and A. E. Cowley, eds. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1910.

John Joseph Owens. *Analytical Key to the Old Testament*. 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989.

William R. Scott. *A Simplified Guide to BHS: Critical Apparatus, Masora, Accents, Unusual Letters and Other Markings*. Berkeley: BIBAL, 1987.

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

Ronald J. Williams. *Hebrew Syntax: An Outline*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1976.

### **Attendance Policy**

Attendance is expected for all class sessions. Every absence beyond one will result in the loss of one grade level (e.g., an A- will be reduced to B+). If this is a problem, please see me the first day of class.

### **Evaluation**

#### **Grade Scale**

A 100-93	B 86-83	C 76-73	D 66-63
A- 92-90	B- 82-80	C- 72-70	D- 62-60
B+ 89-87	C+ 79-77	D+ 69-67	F 59-0

#### **Means of Evaluation**

Weekly assignments and readings 25%

Readings will supplement the lectures, and the assignments will offer opportunities to apply the week's learning. Assignments will be discussed at the beginning of each class period. Completed on-time assignments will receive full credit.

Weekly Quizzes

15%

Quizzes will cover the core grammar of the course as well as vocabulary. There will be no surprises.

4 Exams

60%

The exams are weighted equally and are cumulative. Exam 1 will be solely in-class. Exam 2 - 4 will be take-home. The in-class parts emphasize the core knowledge of Hebrew and the take-home sections stress the application of our acquired knowledge to exegetical situations. **Students may use course resources (textbooks, reserve materials, notes, hand-outs, and BibleWorks) on the take-home portions.**

### Student Feedback

My desire is to facilitate learning so that each of us can acquire knowledge and skills essential for ministry and reach our full potential in Jesus Christ as we grow in grace together. Toward this end, during the last 5-10 minutes of selected class period, I will ask each of you to fill out a "Critical Incident Questionnaire." The CIQ will allow you to give me valuable feedback that will strengthen the course. Over the course of the semester, it will also allow you to track yourself as a learner. The CIQ's will be anonymous, but you will be able to get your sheet back the following week. I will open each class with a discussion of themes/issues raised that may be beneficial to the class as a whole. This exercise will enable all of us to take ownership of the learning process.

The CIQ will ask five questions:

1. At what moment in the class this week did you feel most engaged with what was happening?
2. At what moment in the class this week did you feel most distanced from what was happening?
3. What action that anyone (teacher or student) took in class this week did you find most affirming and helpful?
4. What action that anyone (teacher or student) took in class this week did you find most puzzling or confusing?
5. What about the class this week surprised you the most? (This could be something about your own reactions to what went on, or something that someone did, or anything else that occurs to you.)

Other comments:

### Class Schedule

The following represents a tentative sequencing of the course. All four modules will be covered during the term, but we may need to make adjustments as we proceed.

Students viewing this with the intention of getting a "head-start" are encouraged to begin learning the Hebrew alphabet (Seow, chpt. 1), learn or review your knowledge of BibleWorks 4.0 (if you have access), and read Chisholm, pp. 7-18, 149-186). These are only suggestions.

### *Module One – Phonology: The Sights and Sounds of Biblical Hebrew*

- 2/8 Course Introduction; Why study the original languages?; Consonants  
Assignment: Consonant Exercise; Read *Chisholm*, 7-18, Seow Chpt. 1  
**\*\*if you have not done so for a previous course, you will need to watch the BibleWorks tutorial in the library and complete a worksheet on it by 2/22.**

**2/15** Deut. 6:4-5; Semitic Language Introduction; Vowels and vowel letters; Pronunciation  
Assignment: Phonology worksheet; Read *Chisholm*, 149-86, Seow Chpt 2.  
Quiz: Consonants

**2/22** Introduction to BibleWorks 4.0; Narrative/Poetry as Literature; Review for Exam #1  
Quiz: Transliteration

**3/1 Exam 1**

***Module 2: The Hebrew Noun***

Introduction to BibleWorks 4.0; Basics of the Noun; Noun Declensions  
Assignment: Worksheet; *Chisholm*, 57-61, 64-66, Seow chpt 3

**3/8** Definite Article, Prepositions, Conjunctions, & Adjectives  
Assignment: Worksheet; *Chisholm*, 66-70, 72-75, Seow Chpts 6-7  
Quiz: Vocabulary and Nouns

**3/15** Introduction to BDB lexicon; Noun Construct State,  
Assignment: BDB and Construct Worksheets; *Chisholm*, 62-64; “How to Read BDB”,  
Seow 9, 12  
Quiz: Vocabulary and Nouns

**3/22** Pronouns; Review for Exam  
Assignment: *Chisholm*, 70-72; **Exam 2 (Take-home portion)**  
Quiz: Vocabulary and Nouns

**Module 3: Word Study Methodology**

**3/29** Word Study Methodology and Resources  
Introduction to OT Commentaries and Study Helps  
Assignment: *Chisholm*, 31-56; **Exam 3 Due 5/10**

**4/5 Module 4: The Hebrew Verbal System and Particles**  
Verbal Aspects 1  
Assignment: Worksheet, *Chisholm*, 85-94, Seow 13, 18  
Quiz: Vocabulary

**4/19** Verbal Aspects 2  
Assignment: Worksheet; *Chisholm*, 66-70, 76-78, 103-07, Seow 20  
Quiz: Vocabulary + Perfect and Imperfect Conjugations

**4/26** Verbal Stems  
Assignment: Worksheet; *Chisholm*, 78-85, Seow 15, 16, 26, 28-29  
Quiz: Vocabulary

**5/3** Coordinate Relationships  
Assignment: Worksheets, *Chisholm*, 94-103, 108-12, 119-47  
Quiz: Vocabulary

**5/10** Particles; Introduction to Reference Grammars  
Assignment: **Exam 4**  
Quiz: Vocabulary

**5/17 Exam 4 Due**