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OT 501 Concise Hebrew

Brian D. Russell

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OT501 – Concise Hebrew
Fall 2000 – Asbury Theological Seminary (Florida Campus)
Instructor: Brian D. Russell
Brian_Russell@asburyseminary.edu
Office Phone: 407.482.7660
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-3 PM, Thursday 11-12 AM, others times by appt.

Welcome

Welcome to a brave new world. One in which “me” means “who”, “who” means “he”, “he” means “she”, and “dog” means “fish.” Here, books begin at the end, and pages are read right to left. Welcome my friends to Biblical Hebrew.

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)

Collateral Text

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.

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*. 2nd 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*. 2nd 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 contains in-class and take-home elements. Exams 3 and 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.** To insure fair treatment in evaluation, all tests will be evaluated “blindly.” Use only the last four digits of your SS# or equivalent to identify yourself.

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 each 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.

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

- 9/5** Course Introduction; Why study the original languages?; Consonants
Assignment: Consonant Exercise; Read *Chisholm*, 7-18
****if you have not done so for a previous course, you will need to watch the BibleWorks video in the library and complete a worksheet on it by 9/19.**
- 9/12** Deut. 6:4-5; Semitic Language Introduction; Vowels and vowel letters; Pronunciation
Assignment: Phonology worksheet; Read *Chisholm*, 149-86.
Quiz: Consonants

9/19 Introduction to BibleWorks 4.0; Narrative/Poetry as Literature; Review for Exam #1
Quiz: Transliteration

9/26 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

10/3 Definite Article, Prepositions, Conjunctions, & Adjectives

Assignment: Worksheet; *Chisholm*, 66-70, 72-75

Quiz: Vocabulary and Nouns

10/10 Introduction to BDB lexicon; Noun Construct State

Assignment: BDB and Construct Worksheets; *Chisholm*, 62-64; “How to Read BDB”

Quiz: Vocabulary and Nouns

10/17 Pronouns; Review for Exam

Assignment: *Chisholm*, 70-72; **Exam 2 (Take-home portion)**

Quiz: Vocabulary and Nouns

10/24 Exam 2 (in-class portion)

Module 3: The Hebrew Verbal System and Particles

Verbal Aspects 1

Assignment: Worksheet, *Chisholm*, 85-94

Quiz: Vocabulary

10/31 Verbal Aspects 2

Assignment: Worksheet; *Chisholm*, 66-70, 76-78, 103-07

Quiz: Vocabulary + Perfect and Imperfect Conjugations

11/7 Verbal Stems

Assignment: Worksheet; *Chisholm*, 78-85

Quiz: Vocabulary

11/14 Coordinate Relationships

Assignment: Worksheets, *Chisholm*, 94-103, 108-12, 119-47

Quiz: Vocabulary

11/28 Particles; Introduction to Reference Grammars

Assignment: **Exam 3**

Quiz: Vocabulary

Module 4: Word Study Methodology

12/5 Word Study Methodology and Resources

Introduction to OT Commentaries and Study Helps

Assignment: *Chisholm*, 31-56; **Exam 4**

12/12 Final Exam Due