

OT6100: Hebrew Readings

1 Hour – Spring 2020

Professor Dr. William A. Ross
Class Time Wednesday 1:00–3:00



Exegeting the English text is like kissing your wife through a veil.
You can do it, but it doesn't have the same smack.
– Bruce M. Metzger

To a large extent textual evaluation cannot be bound by any fixed rules.
It is an art in the full sense of the word, a faculty which can be developed,
guided by intuition based on wide experience.
– Emanuel Tov

A. פֶּשֶׁר (Explanation)

COURSE GOALS

1. To glorify and enjoy God by engaging with his Word in the original languages.
2. To increase competency in and enjoyment of Biblical Hebrew by:
 - Further developing capacity for reading and translation of the biblical text in preparation for ministry and research.
 - Understanding and applying more advanced aspects of Hebrew grammar and textual criticism.

PREREQUISITES

Unless otherwise arranged, students in this course must have completed both Hebrew I and II (OT5100, 5125). Although not strictly required, students will more greatly benefit from this course after having also completed Greek I and II (NT5100, 5125).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In order to achieve the Course Goals set out above, we will focus our reading on a number of different passages from the Hebrew Bible throughout our time together. These passages have been selected to illustrate a range of possible reasons for textual variants. Each week will involve close reading of just a few verses with detailed discussion of grammar (morphology, syntax, discourse structure), translation, and the *BHS* textual apparatus. I will provide handouts, overheads, and other materials as necessary. Time permitting, we will also discuss the Sáenz-Badillos reading as outlined in the schedule. All details in this syllabus are subject to change, which will always be communicated in writing.

B. משמרות (Obligations)

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

There are no quizzes, papers, or exams in this course. Your grade is determined on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Attendance

- If you must miss a class (or part of a class) you must discuss this with me in advance to make appropriate arrangements.

2. Preparation

- Each week you must have completed two main tasks prior to arrival in class:
 - i. Read the assigned portion of Sáenz-Badillos
 - ii. Read, study, and translate the assigned Hebrew texts. See also below.

3. Participation

- This class is run as a seminar in which open discussion is the primary pedagogical method. Each week you should demonstrate your preparation in your familiarity with the texts and an ability to interact accurately with the Hebrew language.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Sáenz-Badillos, Angel, *A History of the Hebrew Language*. Translated by John Elwolde; Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Karl Elliger and Wilhelm Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (any edition)

SCHEDULE

<i>Class</i>	<i>Hebrew Texts¹</i>	<i>Related Topic</i>	<i>Reading</i>
25 March	Gen. 4:8; 2 Sam. 22:15; Josh. 21:35–38; Isa. 40:7–8	Minuses	–
1 April	Isa. 30:30; 36:11, 19; [37:9; 2 Kgs. 19:9]	Plusses	ch. 1
8 April	Gen. 22:13; [1 Kgs. 12:2; 2 Chr. 10:2]; [Josh. 5:1; 2 Kgs. 22:4]; [2 Sam. 23:12; 1 Chr. 11:14]; 1 Kgs. 7:45	Interchanges 1	ch. 2
15 April	1 Sam. 17:7; Exod. 14:2; Gen. 49:19–20; 1 Sam. 1:24; Isa. 45:2	Interchanges 2	ch. 3
22 April	[Ps. 31:3; 71:3]; Judg. 19:18; Jon. 1:9; Jer. 6:11	Interchanges 3	ch. 4
29 April	Isa. 9:16; 14:2; Gen. 2:2; 1 Sam. 2:22–23; Jer. 7:3, 7	Content Change 1	ch. 5
6 May	[Judg. 6:32; 1 Chr. 8:33–34]; Deut. 32:8; [2 Sam. 5:21; 1 Chr. 14:12]; Josh. 1:7	Content Change 2	ch. 6

¹ Note that square brackets [] are placed around texts that will be discussed together, and which therefore should be carefully read together and compared in advance.

C. הלכות (Guidelines)

WHAT DOES “PREPARED” MEAN?

We will be working through short passages each class, typically ten verses or fewer. While this may not seem like a lot, the objective is to do a “deep dive” into the assigned passages in terms of its lexical semantics, grammar, discourse structure, paratextual features, and textual variants in order to equip you to do so yourself elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible.

At a minimum, being prepared for class requires doing the following *in advance*: 1) producing a handwritten English translation of the assigned texts; 2) writing a list of all verbs with parsing; and 3) carefully reading the assigned pages of Sáenz-Badillos. If you do all three of these things for every class, you will receive a B in the course.

In order to excel in the class and be eligible for an B+ or above, you should also: 1) label and analyze particles and function words (e.g., כִּי, הִנֵּה, מִפְּנֵי, etc.); 2) label and evaluate other grammatical features that you believe are noteworthy (e.g., construct chains, vocatives, apposition, etc.); 3) categorize clause types (e.g., nominal/verbal, causal, relative, etc.); and 4) note down puzzling features of the text *and the textual apparatus*, particularly where texts are grouped in square brackets for comparison. To help do this you may wish to consult:

Christo H. van der Merwe and Jacobus A. Naudé, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*. 2nd ed.; Bloomsbury T&T Clark: 2017.

RTS CHARLOTTE CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY USAGE

RTS Charlotte recognizes how essential it is for students to have reliable, campus-wide access to the internet. For that reason, we have made Wi-Fi available for our student body, not only in the library and student lounges, but also in the classrooms. We know that students need to use the internet to download class materials, access files on the Cloud, and locate other important information. However, we also recognize that internet access in the classroom provides opportunity for abuse and misuse. Some students have unfortunately used their internet access to engage in many activities that distract them from the classroom lectures (e.g., surfing the web, checking sports scores, playing games). Not only does such activity hamper a student’s own seminary education, but it distracts other students who can easily view the screens of nearby students. In addition, donors and classroom guests (who often sit in the back) can see this inappropriate internet usage, which reflects poorly on RTS. Classroom etiquette includes leaving cell phones turned off, refraining from surfing the Internet or playing computer games or other distracting activities. In addition, students must respect standards set by individual professors regarding the use of technology during their class.

In order to address this issue, we must appeal to the integrity of the students as ones who are preparing for a lifetime of ministry to Christ and his church. We expect each student to take personal responsibility for proper classroom technology usage and to encourage others around them to do the same. All RTS-Charlotte students are accountable to the policies stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Catalog and are therefore expected to use technology in the classroom only for appropriate class-related activities. Student conduct is under the supervision of the Dean of Students.

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: OT6100
 Professor: Ross
 Campus: Charlotte
 Date: Spring 2020

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<p><i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong • Moderate • Minimal • None 	
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	Open discussion, seminar format requires consistent verbal interaction
Scripture	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Strong	Original language texts examined in close detail from throughout the Old Testament
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	None	
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	None	
Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. Includes ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	Discussion of the textual reliability of the Old Testament
Winsomely Reformed	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	None	
Pastoral Ministry	Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both church and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Christians.	None	