

O4OT6105

Biblical Aramaic

Tuesdays, 3-5pm

Spring 2021

Instructor Information

Prof. William M. Wood

BA; MDiv; PhD Candidate

Assistant Professor of Old Testament

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Office Hours: By appointment

I. Course Description

This course is designed to guide students through every Aramaic portion of the Old Testament. The particular focus of this course is therefore on in class translation with discussion on special topics of grammar and syntax.

By learning Aramaic, you are truly working out the following verse:

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” (2 Tim 2.15)

Texts Covered: All OT Aramaic (see course calendar)

II. Course Objectives

1. To gain a reading knowledge of Biblical Aramaic
2. To be introduced to the distinctives of Targumic Aramaic (very briefly as topics arise)
3. To translate and analyze every Aramaic verse in the OT (main feature of the class)
4. To glorify the Lord by focusing on His word in its original language

III. Course Guidelines

Every class will be focused on translation of the assigned text. Therefore, preparation is *an absolute must!* You should come to class prepared to read, translate, and analyze every verse assigned for that class period.

The basic structure for each class period will be simply working through each assigned text. As particular cases arise, we will discuss the necessary grammar and syntax portions of the passage at hand.

You will be required to read the assigned portions of the Rosenthal grammar prior to each meeting. We will briefly touch on this material to address any questions you have prior to our translation portion of the class period.

IV. Course Assignments

Assignment 8 (30%):

You will be required to submit all of your translations with all verb forms parsed collected in a binder at the end of the course. This assignment is primarily focused on completion and is meant to verify your translation of every Aramaic verse.

Assignment 2 (30%):

There will be a mid-term exam covering all translations up to that point. The exam will focus on translation and parsing, with the possibility of a few grammar questions.

Assignment 1 (30%):

There will be a comprehensive final exam at the end of the course. The exam will focus on translation and parsing, with the possibility of a few grammar questions.

Assignment 7 (10%):

Participation. Since this is a language course focused on translation, your participation in class is vital. Failure to come to class prepared will result in a reduction of your participation grade.

Summary

Translation Packet: 30%

Mid-term: 30%

Final: 30%

Participation: 10%

V. Grade Scale

97-100	A	86-87	B-	75-77	D+
94-96	A-	83-85	C+	72-74	D
91-93	B+	80-82	C	70-71	D-
88-90	B	78-79	C-	0-70	F

VI. Texts: Required and Recommended

Required

K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. 5th ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997. (i.e. BHS)

Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Phases of the Aramaic Language," Pages 57-84 in *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays*. Scholars Press, 1984.

John Huehnergard, "What is Aramaic?" *Aram* 7 (1995): 261-82.

S.A. Kaufman, "Aramaic," *Anchor Bible Dictionary*. 4:173-178.

Franz Rosenthal. *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*. 7th, expanded edition. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, Verlag, 2006.

Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Biblical Aramaic Reader: With an Outline Grammar*. Leuven: Peeters, 2015.

Supplemental/recommended for further research

Clines, David J.A. *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. 8 Vols.

Cook, E.M. "Aramaic Language and Literature," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East* 1:178-184.

Creason, Stuart. "Aramaic," in *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the World's Ancient Languages*. Ed. R. D. Woodard. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Fitzmyer, J. and S.A. Kaufman. *An Aramaic Bibliography, Part I: Old, Official, and Biblical Aramaic*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1992.

Kitchen, K.A. "The Aramaic of Daniel," Pages 31-79 in *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*. Ed. by D.J. Wiseman. London: Tyndale: 1965.

Klein, Michael. "Converse Translation: A Targumic Technique," *Biblica* 57 (1976): 515-537.

Li, Tarsee. *The Verbal System of the Aramaic of Daniel*. SAIS 8. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

Mitchel, Larry A. *A Student's Vocabulary for Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017. (updated edition).

Rosen, H. "On the Use of the Tenses in the Aramaic of Daniel," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 6 (1961): 183-203.

Stevenson, Wm B. *Grammar of Palestinian and Jewish Aramaic*. Ancient Language Resources. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1999.

Van Pelt, Miles V. *Basics of Biblical Aramaic*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.

VII. Course Calendar

*For the Muraoka Reader, you should follow at the pace of the translation in class.

Class	Reading	Translation Assignment
2/2	Fitzmyer Huehnergard Kaufman	
2/9	Rosenthal, chapters 1-2	Daniel 2.4b-19
2/16	Rosenthal, chapters 3-4	Daniel 2.20-49
2/23	Rosenthal, 5	Daniel 3
3/2	Rosenthal, 6	Daniel 4
3/9	Rosenthal, 7-8	Daniel 5
3/16	Midterm	
3/23	Rosenthal, 9	Daniel 6
3/30	Rosenthal, 10	Daniel 7
4/5-4/9 Spring Break!		
4/13	Rosenthal, 11	Ezra 4.8-24
4/20	Rosenthal, 12	Ezra 5.1-17
4/27	Rosenthal, 13	Ezra 6.1-18
5/4	Rosenthal, 14	Ezra 7.12-26
Final Exam on 5/11		

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Biblical Aramaic
 Professor: Prof. Wood
 Campus: Atlanta
 Date: Spring 2021

<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.	Moderate	Focused on translation, so you will learn things concerning the meaning of scripture.
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	We are looking at the text after all!
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Minimal	
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Minimal	But, languages do sanctify!
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Minimal	
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.)	Minimal	
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-Xns.	Moderate	Focus on learning how to preach from the text in its original language.

Extension Policy

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.

Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Student Services Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 42 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 14)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 42)

Appendix: Translation Assignment

The key aspect of this assignment is that all of your translations for this semester will be turned in. Your translation of every verse and parsing of every verb (including infinitives and participles) must be included.

It is preferred that this assignment be typed. But, your translation and parsing may be handwritten if you wish.

Note: you may need to leave some of these portions blank when you come to class if you don't understand parts of the verse. You should simply fill these portions in during class.

The primary factor for grading this assignment is *completion*. However, if it is clear that the material has not been completed with sufficient thoughtfulness, the grade will be drastically reduced.

Example from Judges 1.1: (I know its Hebrew, but use this as a structural aid):

H:

וַיְהִי אַחֲרַי מוֹת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וַיִּשְׁאַלוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּיהוָה
 לֵאמֹר מִי יַעֲלֶה-לָנוּ אֶל-הַכְּנָעֲנִי בַתְּחִלָּה לְהִלָּחֵם בָּו:

T: After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel asked the Lord saying: “Who will go up first for us against the Canaanites to fight against them?”

P:

Verb	Root	Stem	Aspect	P/G/N	Misc
וַיְהִי	היה	Qal	Impf	3ms	wcs
וַיִּשְׁאַלוּ	שאל	Qal	Impf	3mp	Wcs
לֵאמֹר	אמר	Qal	Inf C	n/a	Lamed prep
יַעֲלֶה	עלה	Qal	Impf	3ms	n/a
לְהִלָּחֵם	לחם	Nifal	Inf C	n/a	Lamed prep