

# OT5100: Hebrew I

3 Hours – Fall 2021

*Professor* Dr. William A. Ross (wross@rts.edu)  
*TA* Ryan Kaufman (kaufman79@gmail.com)  
*Class Time* Tuesday 8:00AM–12:00PM



Let us be sure of this: we will not long preserve  
the gospel without the languages. (Martin Luther)

דְּלֵא יְלִיף, קְטֹלָא חַיִּב (Rabbi Hillel, *P. Avot 1.13*)<sup>1</sup>

## A. פֶּשֶׁר (Explanation)

### COURSE GOALS

1. Acquire a working knowledge of the fundamentals of Biblical Hebrew, including pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar.
2. Lay a solid foundation on which to build in Hebrew II, with a view to a lifetime of competence with and enjoyment of reading and expositing Biblical Hebrew.
3. Deepen our love for the Word of God in Scripture, as written in the original languages.

### PREREQUISITES &C.

None, but see Pre-Course Assignments below. Additionally, if your knowledge of English grammar is shaky (Do you know what a participle or verbal mood is off the top of your head?), read Frank Braun, *English Grammar for Language Students* before the beginning of the course. It is very brief and affordable.

### DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE

*Study Lab* – (30 min.) Starting at 7:30AM there will be an optional thirty-minute session to review homework assignments and ask questions to prepare for the quiz. You are encouraged but not required to attend. This session will be held beginning on the first day of class.

*Quiz* – (30 min.) Quizzes will cover vocabulary, grammar, and translation and will be graded in class as corporate review.

*Lecture* (2.5 hrs.) Almost all of in-class time will be devoted to explaining new material, involving student participation and translation exercises as time allows.

Class will break from 10:00–11:00AM for chapel (if/when it occurs). An additional break after the first hour of class may also occur, time permitting. Class schedule will differ slightly on the first day of class and on exam days. See information about the midterm and final exams below.

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<sup>1</sup> “One who does not study is likely to die.”

**B. משמרות** (Obligations)

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Adam J. Howell, Benjamin L. Merkle, and Robert L. Plummer, eds., *Hebrew for Life: Strategies for Learning, Retaining, and Reviving Biblical Hebrew*; Baker Academic, 2020.

Gary D. Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition; Zondervan, 2019.

Gary D. Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Workbook*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition; Zondervan, 2019.

William L. Halliday, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. 10<sup>th</sup> ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.

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

**GRADED ASSIGNMENTS**

*Pre-Course Assignments* (3%)

You must complete the following tasks *before the first day of class*:

1. (5pts) Read BBHG 1 and complete Pre-Course Reading Quiz affirming you have done so. (True/False)
2. (10pts) Complete BBHW 1 in full to turn in on the first day of class.
3. Read the first chapter of *Hebrew for Life*.

When you are finished tasks 2. and 3. above, you should be able to write and identify each Hebrew consonant by name (including final forms), and know what sound they make. Note that **you will have a quiz on the first day of class** covering BBHG 1.

*Quizzes* (29%)

You will have twelve quizzes, usually covering vocabulary and grammatical concepts from the previous class, plus a small and randomized selection of material you should already know. Vocabulary comes directly from lists in the assigned chapters in *BBHG* and is always cumulative. You will also be asked to indicate your completion of the assigned chapters in *Hebrew for Life (HFL)*, according to the schedule below. Extra credit will be possible on each quiz and your lowest quiz score will be dropped.

*Midterm* (29%)

The midterm will be taken in class and cover all material up to that point. You will also be asked about your completion of the assigned chapters in *Hebrew for Life (HFL)*.

*Final Exam* (39%)

The final exam will be taken by hand, on campus, during the exam period. It will include material from all topics covered in class, including vocabulary, grammar, and translation (*BBHG* §§1–3).

C. **חוקות** (Statutes)**GRADING POLICY & SCALE**

		A	100–97	C	82–80
3%	Pre-Course Assignments	A-	96–94	C-	79–78
29%	Quizzes	B+	93–91	D+	77–75
29%	Midterm	B	90–88	D	74–72
39%	Final Exam	B-	87–86	D-	71–70
		C+	85–83	F	69–0

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

*All parts of this syllabus are subject to change.  
Any and all such changes will be communicated in advance.*

	<i>Date</i>	<i>In-Class Activity</i>	<i>Assignments Due</i>	<i>Testing</i>
<i>Aug</i>	31 <sup>st</sup>	Course Introduction Hebrew Alphabet & Vowels (1–2)	Pre-Course Assignments	Quiz 1
<i>September</i>	7 <sup>th</sup>	Syllabification, Pronunciation, Nouns (3–4)	BBHW 2	Quiz 2 HFL 1
	14 <sup>th</sup>	Definite Article, Conjunction, Prepositions (5–6)	BBHW 3–4	Quiz 3
	21 <sup>st</sup>	Adjectives & Pronouns (7–8)	BBHW 5–6	Quiz 4 HFL 2
	28 <sup>th</sup>	Pronominal Suffixes (9)	BBHW 7–8	Quiz 5
	5 <sup>th</sup>	Construct Chain (10)	BBHW 9	Quiz 6 HFL 3
<i>October</i>	12 <sup>th</sup>	[Fall Break: No Class]		
	19 <sup>th</sup>	Numbers (11)	BBHW 10	<b>Midterm</b> HFL 4–5
	26 <sup>th</sup>	Introduction to Verbs & Qal Perfect Strong (12–13)	BBHW 11	Quiz 7
<i>November</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Qal Perfect Weak (14)	BBHW 12–13	Quiz 8 HFL 6
	9 <sup>th</sup>	Qal Imperfect Strong (15)	BBHW 14	Quiz 9
	16 <sup>th</sup>	Qal Imperfect Weak (16)	BBHW 15	Quiz 10 HFL 7
	23 <sup>rd</sup>	[ETS/SBL Conferences: No Class]		
	30 <sup>th</sup>	Waw Consecutive (17)	BBHW 16	Quiz 11
<i>Dec</i>	7 <sup>th</sup>	Qal Imperative (18)	BBHW 17	Quiz 12 HFL 8–9
	14 <sup>th</sup>	[Exam Period: No Class]		

## D. הלכות (Guidelines)

### OTHER IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

#### *Homework*

You will have daily homework consisting (usually) of translation, grammar, and parsing exercises. This homework comes directly from the *Workbook* (BBHW) and corresponds to the chapter(s) covered each day (see schedule). **Note that with the exception of BBHW 1 for the Pre-Course Assignments, I do not collect or grade homework.** Obviously this means you can decide not to do it, or to do it half-heartedly, but that would be a serious mistake. Do the work carefully, find your weak spots, and participate in the Study Lab for review and extra practice to facilitate the learning process.

#### *Study Lab*

Students have the option of meeting with the TA prior to class to review homework assignments and to help you prepare for the quiz with extra examples. These 30-minute sessions are an addition to the daily class meetings but *participating is not required or graded*. This is simply for your benefit. The Study Lab will begin meeting on the first day of the course.

#### *Tutoring*

In addition to the Study Lab, students will have free tutoring made available with the TA, typically in small groups. If you are interested in participating in such a group, contact the TA directly. **Tutoring is available only to those students already attending Study Lab on a regular basis, unless approved by the professor.**

#### *Attendance, Timeliness, Momentum*

I will not take attendance, but attendance is not optional. If for any reason you know that you will be forced to miss a day of class or a quiz – or to be late joining the class session – you *must* discuss this with me in advance to make arrangements. Failure to do so may affect your final grade. Missing all or part of a single day will create serious problems in your progress studying Hebrew.

#### *Participation, Laptops, and Note-Taking*

You are expected to be at full focus in class and to participate by responding to my questions and asking your own. **No computers are permitted in class for the duration of this course.** Furthermore, we will not be using Bible software for anything in this course.<sup>2</sup> Learning the biblical languages well is an analog process: Physical books, physical paper, and a good pencil.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> I consider digital tools for vocabulary acquisition (e.g., Quizlet, Anki, etc.) an exception to this policy.

<sup>3</sup> The pen is utterly overrated and should be avoided. I highly recommend the very affordable and excellent quality Pentel Graph Gear 1000 or, if you have a few more pennies to spend, the rOtring 600 (or even the retractable 800). If you use 0.7mm HB lead, then you will earn a heavenly reward (actually, that's not true but it is still the best lead size and weight).

Since you are not allowed to use a computer, **I will provide detailed, color note packets for you to use in class.** These packets will be made available digitally in advance. You may print them out on your own or purchase a physical copy through Amazon (details to come).

### *Vocabulary*

You will never be able to read biblical Hebrew if you do not know the vocabulary. In this course you will learn approximately 350 vocabulary words. Quizzes will always be “cumulative” (and will continue to be, even in Hebrew II and Hebrew Exegesis). Every word that you have been assigned starting in Hebrew I will be fair game, so stay frosty.

I do not care how you learn and review your vocabulary – textbook, flashcards, audio, Quizlet, whatever.<sup>4</sup> But I do expect you to know it well. Any of the following resources will work, depending on your study preferences, though none are strictly required:

Miles V. Van Pelt and Gary D. Pratico, *Old Testament Hebrew Flashcards*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Zondervan: 2004.

Gary D. Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt, *The Vocabulary Guide to Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition; Zondervan, 2019.

Miles V. Van Pelt and Gary D. Pratico, *Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary in Context*. Zondervan: 2019.

J. David Pleins, *Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary by Conceptual Categories: A Student's Guide to Nouns in the Old Testament*. Zondervan: 2017.

Jesse R. Scheumann and Merissa Scheumann, *Picture Hebrew Flashcards*. Available on Amazon.

### *Other Recommended Texts*

- a. Miles V. Van Pelt, *Biblical Hebrew: A Compact Guide*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Zondervan: 2019.
- b. Gary D. Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt, *Biblical Hebrew Laminated Sheet*. Zondervan, 2005.
- c. Gary D. Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt, *Charts of Biblical Hebrew*. Zondervan, 2007.
- d. Frederic Clarke Putnam, *Hebrew Bible Insert: A Student's Guide to the Syntax of Biblical Hebrew*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition; Stylus Publications: 2002.<sup>5</sup>
- e. Gary D. Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt, *Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary in Context*. Zondervan, 2019.
- f. Donald A. Vance, George Athas, et al. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia: A Reader's Edition*. Hendrickson, 2015.

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<sup>4</sup> With that said, I am always happy to discuss learning strategies and options if you have concerns.

<sup>5</sup> Out of print but still available for purchase online. Putnam has made a free PDF download available, which can be easily located with a simple internet search.

## **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: OT5100 Hebrew I  
 Professor: Ross

Campus: Charlotte  
 Date: Fall 2021

<b><u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u></b>		<b><u>Rubric</u></b>	<b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>
<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"> <li>➤ Strong</li> <li>➤ Moderate</li> <li>➤ Minimal</li> <li>➤ None</li> </ul>	
<b>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</b>	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.	None	
<b>Scripture</b>	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	Beginning skills taught for reading, understanding, and thus interpreting Scripture through the use of Hebrew.
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	None	
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Minimal	Open class with a brief prayer and devotional song (in Hebrew).
<b>Worldview</b>	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	Encouragement to build lifetime habits of reading the OT in the original Hebrew.
<b>Winsomely Reformed</b>	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	
<b>Pastoral Ministry</b>	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.	Moderate	Equips students with foundational skillset for later refinement.