



OT 506 – OLD TESTAMENT EXEGESIS II
Spring 2019 • 2 Semester Hours
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I. PURPOSE

Learning to read the Scriptures in their original languages can be compared to watching a sports game on a high-definition screen. A standard television screen will enable you to follow the game adequately, but "hi-def" is so much more detailed and life-like. In the same way, English translations of the OT do an admirable job of bringing God's word to contemporary readers, but reading the Hebrew Bible can give the text a greater sharpness and clarity that can add richness and color to your preaching or teaching ministry. Assuming that you have studied the basics of Hebrew grammar, this course continues the work begun in Old Testament Exegesis I by giving you additional experience in translating and exegeting directly from the Hebrew text. Whereas OT Exegesis I focused heavily on a review of the vocabulary, word forms, and grammatical concepts of basic biblical Hebrew, this course will introduce you to the more advanced concepts of Hebrew syntax and the structure of Hebrew poetry through a focused study of the Psalms. You will learn how to move from the technical work of exegesis to the practical work of constructing sermons and Bible lessons from the Hebrew text. You will also receive an introduction to the field of Old Testament textual criticism that will provide you with the tools necessary to make judgments regarding variations in the Old Testament text.

II. EDUCATIONAL AND PERSONAL OBJECTIVES

- to become familiar with advanced concepts of Hebrew syntax;
- to gain more experience in sentence diagramming as a way of doing syntactical analysis;
- to become familiar with the various tools and resources available for advanced Hebrew exegesis;
- to gain knowledge of the basic tools required for doing Old Testament textual criticism;
- to understand the structure and function of Hebrew poetry;
- to become equipped to construct sermons and Bible lessons directly from the Hebrew text;
- to be enriched and strengthened in your devotional life and walk with God through the study of the Scriptures in their original language.

III. WEEKLY CLASS SESSIONS

The first hour of each two-hour class session will typically begin with a lecture focusing on a specific aspect of the exegesis and interpretation of the Psalms. The second hour will normally be devoted to review and discussion of the week's exegetical assignment or to student presentations. Assignments, papers, and exams for the course will be submitted online using the Canvas Learning Management System.

IV. READING ASSIGNMENTS

Thoughtful and critical reading is an essential skill for your personal and academic development, and thus the reading assignments form an essential part of the learning process for this course. This emphasis is reflected in the fact that the completion of the course reading assignments constitutes one quarter of your grade. Thus, failure to complete the reading assignments on a timely basis will have a substantial impact on your final grade.

The primary textbook for this course is the Hebrew Bible. Weekly translation and exegetical analysis assignments from the book of Psalms have been assigned. The aid you in completing these assignments, the use of a morphologically analyzed electronic Hebrew Bible is recommended. There are several versions of the Hebrew Bible available for free use on the Internet. All work for the class, including Hebrew, will be completed electronically and submitted by email.

The course will also employ two additional textbook resources—Mark Futato’s *Interpreting the Psalms*, and *Old Testament Textual Criticism* by Ellis Brotzman (see textbook list below). Futato’s book is an in-depth guide to exegeting the Psalms that includes discussions of historical backgrounds and provides practical help in proclaiming and living the Psalms. Brotzman’s book provides a solid introduction to the field of Old Testament textual criticism that will help you in tackling variations in the text and differences between the Hebrew text and the ancient translations. Weekly syntactical analysis and diagramming assignments will supplement the material in the Workbook.

Progress in the completion of the weekly textbook reading assignments will be assessed by alternating reading quizzes and summaries throughout the semester, covering each week’s reading assignment. The quizzes will focus on the broad themes and major points of the textbook reading assignments rather than minutia. See the course calendar below for the specific weekly assignments.

V. EXEGETICAL ASSIGNMENTS

Each week a Psalm or a portion of a Psalm will be assigned for exegetical analysis and translation. For the passage in question, create a table including each Hebrew verb, its lexical source word, its complete parsing, and its literal translation, using the model provided in class. Then make both a literal and smooth translation directly from the Hebrew. Also include a clause analysis array, in Hebrew and English, of the passage based on the model provided. Finally, make four brief comments (around 50 words each) on significant grammatical points within the translated passage that may affect the meaning. (The grammatical points need not be limited to comments on the parsed verbs.)

VI. EXEGETICAL PAPER

The course paper will be an exegetical analysis of a particular Psalm or portion of a Psalm of approximately ten verses in length. The chosen portion must not be from the passages covered in the course assignments. The exegetical paper should include a parsing table analyzing each word of the portion covered, a literal translation, a syntactical outline of the portion’s clauses and phrases, and brief (250-word) discussions of five key exegetical points related to the portion. The exegetical discussion should include an example from the text of how Hebrew poetry is used to enhance the message of the Psalm. The paper is due by 11:59 p.m. on **May 19**.

VII. STUDENT PRESENTATION

Each student will be responsible to present a 20-minute exegetical analysis of the Psalm or Psalm portion chosen for the exegetical paper. The presentation should focus on how an understanding of the vocabulary and language of the Hebrew text sheds light on the meaning of the passage, and how these insights can be used in preaching and teaching. You should provide your fellow students with an outline of the presentation, including a Hebrew synopsis and syntactical array, the evening of your presentation. The use of audio-visual media is optional. Presentations will be scheduled for **May 7**.

VIII. ATTENDANCE AND GRADING

Attendance at each class session is expected and will be monitored. However, to allow for unanticipated circumstances, two unexcused absences will be allowed without penalty. Each unexcused absence beyond the two will result in a 5% penalty against the final grade. Excuses may be granted for personal or family emergencies only. Emergencies include such things as the hospitalization of yourself or an immediate family member but do not include such things as work-related scheduling conflicts.

Letter grades will be assigned using the scale presented in the seminary catalog. Your grade for this course will be weighted as follows:

- 30%: Weekly Assignments & Presentation
- 10%: Student Presentation

- 30%: Reading Quizzes
- 30%: Exegetical Analysis Paper

VIII. TEXTBOOKS

Required Resources:

Mark D. Futato, *Interpreting the Psalms: An Exegetical Handbook* (Kregel, 2007)

Ronald J. Williams and John C. Beckman, *Williams' Hebrew Syntax*, 3rd ed. (University of Toronto Press, 2007).

Ellis R. Brotzman, *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction* (Baker, 1996).

Recommended Resources:

A. Philip Brown II and Bryan W. Smith, Eds., *A Reader's Hebrew Bible* (Zondervan, 2008) or another electronic Hebrew Bible with parsing.

William L. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Eerdmans, 1971) or another Hebrew lexicon.

Bruce K. Waltke and James M. Houston, *The Psalms as Christian Worship: A Historical Commentary* (Eerdmans, 2009).

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Lecture, Reading, and Assignment Schedule

DATE	LECTURE TOPICS	READING TOPICS AND PAGES	ASSIGNMENTS
Feb 5	The Psalms in the Second Temple Period	Analyzing the Parts; Penetrating the Parallelism; Seeing the Pictures; Following the Patterns; <i>IP</i> 23-56	
Feb 12	History of Interpretation 1: Ancient and Medieval	The Purpose of the Psalms; The Message of the Psalms; <i>IP</i> , 57-94	Psalm 1
Feb 19	History of Interpretation 2: Reformation	Themes in the Psalms; The Role of History; The State of the Text; <i>IP</i> 95-138	Psalm 15
Feb 26	History of Interpretation 3: Modern	What are the categories? Why are the categories important? What are the basic categories? <i>IP</i> 139-159	Psalm 22:1-9 (Eng. 1-8)
Mar 5	History of Interpretation 4: Contemporary	What do the categories have to do with Christ? The Royal Psalms; <i>IP</i> 160-182	Psalm 22:10-16 (Eng. 9-15)
Mar 12	Focus on the Psalms 1: Psalm 1, The Rewarded Life	Proclaiming the Psalms; <i>IP</i> 183-208	Psalm 22:17-25 (Eng. 16-24)
Mar 19	Focus on the Psalms 2: Psalm 15, A Liturgical Decalogue	Practicing the Principles; <i>IP</i> 209-230	Psalm 22:26-32 (Eng. 25-31)
Mar 26	SPRING BREAK		
Apr 2	Focus on the Psalms 3: Psalm 22, Messianic Suffering Foreseen	Introduction; Ancient Writing; <i>OTTC</i> 17-36	Psalm 51:1-7 (Eng. 1-5)
Apr 9	Focus on the Psalms 4: Psalm 23, Trusting the Good Shepherd	Transmission of the OT; <i>OTTC</i> 37-62	Psalm 51:8-16 (Eng. 6-14)
Apr 16	Focus on the Psalms 5: Psalm 51, The Cry of the Penitent	Ancient Versions of the OT; <i>OTTC</i> 63-86	Psalm 51:17-21 (Eng. 15-19)
Apr 23	Focus on the Psalms 6: Psalm 110, The Rewarded Life	Dead Sea Scrolls; <i>BHS</i> ; <i>OTTC</i> 87-106	Psalm 110
Apr 30	Focus on the Psalms 7: Psalm 139, Search me, O God	Scribal Errors; Principles and Practice of TC; <i>OTTC</i> 107-132	
May 7	STUDENT PRESENTATION		
May 14	<i>No Class: Exegetical Paper Due by 11:59 p.m. on May 19</i>		