

POINT LOMA NAZARENE UNIVERSITY
Biblical Hebrew II
Spring 2019

Instructor: Sam Powell

Telephone: 849.2334

Website: www.samuelmpowell.com

Department assistant: 849.2234

Office hours: MWF 8:30-9:45 and TTh 10:00-11:30. Other times may be scheduled by appointment by calling the departmental assistant (x2234) or my office.

Office: Smee Hall/The Wesleyan Center

Email: spowell@pointloma.edu

Course Description and Purpose

This course is designed to introduce the student to the basic vocabulary and grammar of classical Hebrew in order that the student might be able to have a working knowledge of the language and be able to work directly with the Hebrew text of the Old Testament (OT). This course is the first of two; together they comprise a year-long introduction to biblical Hebrew.

Cognitive development will be encouraged through textbook readings, classroom lectures/discussions, outside projects, and periodic examinations. Social development will be encouraged through small group interactions and projects. While the study of a language might focus primarily upon cognitive development, spiritual development will also be encouraged as the student is enabled to work with narrative and poetic artistry of an ancient culture, thereby gaining a deeper appreciation for that ancient society as well as a deeper appreciation for the faith reflected in the Hebrew Bible.

Course Learning Outcomes

The professor brings to this class the following intentions for personal and corporate learning. They establish an initial framework for the development of individual and group learning goals. The class sessions, readings, and assignments should enable the student to:

- possess a functional knowledge of Biblical Hebrew **grammar, syntax, and vocabulary**;
- begin developing competency in **reading and translating** the Hebrew Bible's prose and poetry;
- be exposed to various **research resources and reference works** for biblical exegesis;
- explore the **significance** of Hebrew language study for theological **exegesis/interpretation**.

Course Texts (you will need all books for both semesters)

- E. Simon, I. Resnikoff, and L. Motzkin, *The First Hebrew Primer, 3rd Edition* (Oakland, CA: EKS Publishing, 2005).
- K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (5th ed.; student ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997, 2001).
- F. Brown, S.R. Driver, and C.A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (repr. ed.; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996) ["BDB"].
- Peter James Silzer and Thomas John Finley, *How Biblical Languages Work: A Student's Guide to Learning Hebrew and Greek* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2004).
- Bruce Einspahr, *Index to Brown, Driver & Briggs Hebrew Lexicon* (Moody, 1976).

Course Requirements

1. Class Participation and Attendance: Language acquisition requires consistency. Attendance and consistent preparation are absolutely vital to your success in this class. In fact, the serious language student will miss class only in the case of extreme emergency or illness (as a famous Hebrew scholar once said, "I always helped older people across the street, unless I was on my way to Hebrew class!"). The grading procedures reflect this importance; emphasis is on homework and regular quizzes. *The goal here is to reward the student's*

regular investment of time in studying Hebrew rather than perfection on exams (though excellence in this area is desirable as well!).

If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings (*more than THREE [3] classes*), the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent (*more than SIX [6] classes*), the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog. In the event of absence, it is the student's responsibility to obtain notes, homework, handouts, etc. from fellow students.

2. **Homework Assignments:** *Homework assignments will be graded (and will count) every day!* This will primarily be done together as a group in class during the first part of the period before moving on to new material. Homework assignments will be given out in the class period before they are due. *You can relax (☺); there will be no surprises here. You will know exactly what you need to do to be successful every day!* Plus, there will be plenty of opportunities for extra-credit! **Each student will receive a Homework Log on which to record their scores for the professor's review (**detach from back of syllabus).**

*NOTE: *How to Score Homework:* Each question, blank, answer, etc. is worth 3 points. To score: totally correct answer= 3 pts; mostly correct answer= 2 pts; mostly incorrect answer= 1 pt; totally incorrect answer or left blank= 0 pts. Extra-credit questions should be scored the same way. Yes, this grading relies on an honor code and involves some subjectivity. That's ok! However, abuse of this honor code will subject one to the curses of Deuteronomy 28!

3. **Quizzes:** Vocabulary and grammar quizzes will be given at the rate of about one per week. These are opportunities for the student to reinforce (read: "rejoice in"!) those things he/she has been learning. The student will drop the 2 lowest quiz grades.

4. **Celebrations of Learning:** There will be three such celebrations (often called, erroneously, "examinations"). The first will be on February 20. The second will be on March 25. The third will be the final during *final exams week*. Study guides will be provided.

5. **Synagogue Visit and Reflection Paper:** Because the study of Hebrew is not simply a cognitive experience but also involves social and spiritual aspects, each student will attend a service at a local Jewish synagogue and write a brief reflection paper that considers the experience. **I recommend the students attend a Friday evening Shabbat service at Congregation Beth Israel in La Jolla (9001 Towne Centre Drive, San Diego, CA 92122).** It is recommended that the student call the synagogue in advance to discuss his or her visit to the service.

Following the visit, the student will write a *2 to 3 pages, double-spaced* reflection paper (typed, with 1-inch margins on all sides). *The paper should describe two things: 1) what specific things the student observed while in the service and 2) what the student learned from his or her visit.* The paper is due at the start of class on Monday, April 15.

Course Policies

1. **Grading:** The student's grade will be based on a combination of class participation, reading, assignments, and exams as follows:

Homework Assignments	35%
Quizzes (drop 2 lowest)	25%
Celebrations of Learning (3)	30% (10% each)
Synagogue Visit Paper	10%

2. **Inclusive language:** The School of Theology and Christian Ministry is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, the school urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussion, and in their writings. This course will strive to practice sensitivity toward and foster

respect for issues of inclusivity in matters of language and conduct. Each student should seek to enrich this inclusive atmosphere in both their class contributions and personal interactions.

3. Late Work Policy: In order not to be considered “late,” all assignments must be submitted **in person, in hard copy, in class** on the day listed as the due date. *NO assignment may be submitted electronically (by email, etc.) for full credit.* If the student “forgets” an assignment, he or she may submit it after class (either electronically or in hard copy) for no more than half credit. Any assignment submitted electronically (whether late or on-time) will receive no more than half credit. *No assignment will be accepted for credit of any kind more than one week after the original due date.*

4. Academic Accommodations: While all students are expected to meet the minimum academic standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may require academic accommodations. At Point Loma Nazarene University, students requesting academic accommodations must file documentation with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center. Once the student files documentation, the Disability Resource Center will contact the student’s instructors and provide written recommendations for reasonable and appropriate accommodations to meet the individual needs of the student. This policy assists the university in its commitment to full compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act of 1990, and ADA Amendments Act of 2008, all of which prohibit discrimination against students with disabilities and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities.

Here are some concrete tips for succeeding *and* lowering anxiety along the way:

a. Don’t be afraid to make mistakes, especially in class! Remember, this is OUR group; we support each other and work together. Also remember, this class is designed to reward your consistent efforts and not simply perfection!

b. Do homework assignments (and study for quizzes, tests, etc.) in groups. Work on them together, share answers, problems, etc. THIS IS NOT “CHEATING”! ☺ Perhaps have “Hebrew lunches” (or dinners) where you talk about what we’re doing (a date?-- ok, so we’re “Bible Nerds”).

c. Make *flashcards/ notecards* for vocabulary study. This tool is invaluable. Keep them with you everywhere and you will find opportunities to practice vocabulary when you least expect it. Plus, it’s a real conversation piece (I met my wife this way! ☺).

d. Podcasts, music, & Israeli Movies: I encourage you to listen to Hebrew, even if you cannot understand it. It is simply good to have the sounds in your ear for purposes of pronunciation and development of a sense of the “flow” of the language. You may also want to watch an Israeli movie or two. Or, try attending multiple services at different synagogues (you may want to call them first for information). Anything you can do in these areas will be beneficial (and fun!). Please let me know if you run across anything interesting in the way of Hebrew media!

וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה, אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם--עַל-לְבָבְךָ.
וּשְׁנַנְתָּם לְבְנֶיךָ, וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם, בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִכְתְּךָ בְּדַרְךָ, וּבְשֹׁכְבְךָ
וּבְקוּמְךָ

And these words, which I command you today, will be on your heart. And you will teach them to your children, and you will talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk in the way and when you lie down and when you arise. (Deut. 6)

