203 — Hebrew Grammar 1
Virginia Beach Theological Seminary
Virginia Beach, VA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor:	Kyle C. Dunham, ThD		Term:	Fall 2013
Office:	757.479.3706 x321		Class Meeting Days:	Tuesday & Friday
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Office Hours:	Tuesday–Thursday, 2:00–3:00 PM			

I. WELCOME!

Welcome, students, to Hebrew Grammar 1. I'm excited about this opportunity to study together the core elements of the language of biblical Hebrew. I trust that the skills and knowledge gained will become invaluable to you as you seek better to understand and, in turn, to teach and preach sacred Scripture.

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This three credit-hour course is an introduction to biblical Hebrew designed to equip the student with a basic vocabulary of key Hebrew terms; an understanding of the essential principles of phonology, morphology, and syntax with regard to biblical Hebrew; and an appreciation for the value of biblical Hebrew in performing exegesis of the Old Testament.

III. COURSE RATIONALE

It is essential that the student of the Word of God obtain the tools necessary for an accurate interpretation and a deeper appreciation of the text of the OT. The Hebrew Scriptures which we accept as the Word of God were written originally in the Hebrew and Aramaic languages of the ancient Near East. Any student of Scripture who wishes to heighten his expertise in the exposition of the literature of the OT must have some acquaintance with its original languages.

According to one historical declaration of the Christian faith, the final authority for resolving questions of interpretation resides in the Scriptures written in the original languages: "The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic" (*Second London Baptist Confession*, 1689). Throughout the history of the church, the people of God have labored diligently to provide translations of the Word of God in the mother tongue of those who do not know the original languages of Scripture (cf. William Tyndale's famous statement to the Roman Catholic clergy: "If God spare my life, ere many years pass I will cause a boy who driveth the plough to know more of the scriptures than thou dost"). Martin Luther once noted: "In proportion, then, as we prize the Gospel, let us guard the languages. For not in vain did God have His Scriptures set down in these two languages alone—the Old Testament in Hebrew, the New in Greek. The languages, therefore, that God did not despise but chose above all others for His Word, we too ought to honor above all others. . . And let us be sure of this: we shall not long preserve the Gospel without the languages. . . Hence it is certain that unless the languages remain the Gospel must

finally perish" ("To The Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools," 1524). Whether in the realm of preaching or teaching or translation, the student must obtain a certain degree of proficiency in the biblical languages if he is to be prepared adequately for ministry.

IV.   LEARNING OUTCOMES
1. The student will understand the basic phonological, morphological, and syntactical categories of biblical Hebrew.
2. The student will be recognize most vocabulary terms occurring fifty or more times in the Hebrew Bible.
3. The student will be able to identify fundamental grammatical elements and translate basic readings from the Hebrew Scriptures.
4. The student will become proficient in reading aloud (pronouncing) the Hebrew of any passage in the OT.

V.   REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS
Pratico, Gary D., and Miles V. Van Pelt. *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007.

———. *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Workbook*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007.

VI.   COURSE ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION
Due to the rigors of language learning, I ask that, unless providentially hindered, you make every effort to be in class each time that we meet. One week of class (or 3 classroom hours) may be missed without academic penalty. One point will be deducted from the final grade for each additional hour of class that is missed (outside of extenuating circumstances). Three class tardies will register as one hour of missed class. Failure to attend 70% of the course (30 hours of class) will result in failure of the course. Along with attendance, students are expected to participate in the lectures.

VII.   COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Our approach to learning biblical Hebrew will feature a blend of deductive and inductive approaches. This methodology requires that the student persevere in spite of the "language fog" that will soon envelop. In light of this, the illegitimate use of aids and/or shortcuts will cripple the student's long-term proficiency in the language. The student should therefore *not* use computer software such as *BibleWorks* or *Accordance* while in class or in the preparation of his or her homework.

1. **Reading assignments**. Course reading assignments total twenty (20) sections. Each class you will be asked to mark whether or not you read the assigned portion. Each student is allowed two (2) grace days in cases of providential hindrance in which he was not able to complete the assigned reading portion. (A grace day does not eliminate the assignment for the student but merely postpones it without penalty until the next class period). The student is expected to complete the reading by the next class period and to inform the professor of his or her completion of the assignment. (A WORD TO THE WISE: Biblical Hebrew is like a steamboat surging ahead. If you get behind in your reading or your understanding of the concepts we cover each week, you will be left to founder and drown in the raging waters. Do your best to keep up.). Late reading assignments not covered by a grace day will accrue a 10% late penalty.

2. **Workbook exercises**. Course workbook exercises total twenty-two (22) sections. These are to be turned in the class day after they are assigned in the syllabus. Each student is allowed one (1) grace day in case of a providential hindrance in which he cannot complete the assignment. The student is asked to notify the teacher when he is taking his grace day. As with the reading assignments, the grace day does not eliminate the assignment for the student but merely

postpones it without penalty until the next class period. Late workbook exercises not covered by the grace day will accure a 10% late penalty.

3. **Vocabulary and syntax quizzes**. Vocabulary and syntax quizzes will occur twenty (20) times during the semester. These quizzes will be given on the class day they appear in the course syllabus. Quizzes will be considered late after they have been collected in class by the instructor. In the event a student misses a quiz, the instructor will leave a sealed copy of the quiz in the student's box. The student will take the quiz without helps, observing the honor code in the CBTS catalog. Quizzes that are late by more than one class period will receive a 10% late penalty.

4. **Exams**. There will be three (3) exams given during the course, which account for a significant portion of the student's grade. The exams will occur on the dates in which they appear in the course syllabus.

VIII.   **COURSE GRADING PROCEDURES**
1.   Reading assignments: 12.5% of total grade
2.   Workbook exercises: 12.5% of total grade
3.   Vocabulary and syntax quizzes: 30% of total grade
4.   Exams: 45% of total grade

The following grading scale and criteria is used in the evaluation of all course work (see the VBTS Catalog):

- 96-100 (4.0 / A) Outstanding work: superior achievement of course objectives
- 94-95 (3.7 / A-)
_____
- 92-93 (3.3 / B+) Good work: commendable achievement of course objectives
- 89-91 (3.0 / B)
- 87-88 (2.7 / B-)
_____
- 85-86 (2.3 / C+) Acceptable work: satisfactory achievement of course objectives
- 81-84 (2.0 / C)
- 79-80 (1.7 / C-)
_____
- 77-78 (1.3 / D+) Minimal work: marginal achievement of course objectives
- 72-76 (1.0 / D)
- 70-71 (0.7 / D-)
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- 0-69 (0.0 / F) Failure: unacceptable work

IX.   **COURSE SUPPORT**
Course materials can be accessed at http://www.vbts.edu/ by means of the "Populi" icon.

If you have questions about this course, either in general or specific, as to how assignments should be completed or anything of a course nature, please contact me by e-mail: kyle.dunham@vbts.edu or by phone (see contact information details above).

If you need support for anything related to using Populi or experience any log-in problems, please contact the iSchool administrator by calling the office at (757) 479-3706 or e-mail via info@vbts.edu.

X.   COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topic	Reading Due	Homework Due	Quiz (Type; Content)
1	8/27	Introduction: Syllabus and Prolegomena			
	8/30	The Alphabet: Consonants	Chapter 1 and "The Identity & History of the Hebrew Language"	Workbook Exercise 1	*1. Syntax*: Hebrew Alphabet
2	9/3	The Alphabet: Vowels	Chapter 2	Workbook Exercise 2	*2. Syntax*: Vowel Names
	9/6	Syllabification and Pronunciation	Chapter 3	Workbook Exercise 3	*3. Vocabulary*: Chapter 3
3	9/10	Hebrew Nouns	Chapter 4	Workbook Exercise 4	*4. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-4
	9/13	Definite Article and Conjunction Waw	Chapter 5	Workbook Exercise 5	*5. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-5
4	9/17	Hebrew Prepositions;	Chapter 6	Workbook Exercise 6	*6. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-6
	9/20	*Review and Exam Prep*			
5	9/24	**Exam 1**			
	9/27	Hebrew Adjectives	Chapter 7	Workbook Exercise 7	*7. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-7
6	10/1	Hebrew Pronouns	Chapter 8	Workbook Exercise 8	*8. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-8
	10/4	Hebrew Pronominal Suffixes	Chapter 9	Workbook Exercise 9	*9. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-9
7	10/8	Hebrew Construct Chain	Chapter 10	Workbook Exercise 10	*10. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-10
	10/11	Hebrew Numbers	Chapter 11	Workbook Exercise 11	*11. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-11
8	10/15	Hebrew Verbs	Chapter 12	Workbook Exercise 12a-b	*12. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-12
	10/18	Qal Perfect - Strong Verbs	Chapter 13	Workbook Exercise 13	*13. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-13
9	10/22	*Review and Exam Prep*			*14. Syntax:* Hebrew Verbs
	10/25	**Exam 2**			
10	10/29	Qal Perfect - Weak Verbs	Chapter 14a	Workbook Exercise 14a	
	11/1	Qal Perfect - Weak Verbs	Chapter 14b	Workbook Exercise 14b	*15. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-14
11	11/5	Qal Imperfect - Strong Verbs	Chapter 15	Workbook Exercise 15	*16. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-15

	11/8	Qal Imperfect - Weak Verbs	Chapter 16	Workbook Exercises 16a-b	*17. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-16
12	11/12	Qal Imperfect - Weak Verbs	Chapter 16b	Workbook Exercise 16c-f	*18. Syntax:* Weak Verbs
	11/15	Waw Consecutive	Chapter 17	Workbook Exercise 17	*19. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-17
13	11/19	*No Class -- National ETS Meeting*			
	11/22				
14	11/26	*No Class -- Thanksgiving Break*			
	11/29				
15	12/3	Qal Imperative, Cohortative, and Jussive	Chapter 18	Workbook Exercise 18a	*20. Vocabulary*: Chapters 3-18
	12/6	Selected readings from the Hebrew Bible and prep for spring semester		Workbook Exercises 18b-c	
16	12/10	*Review and Exam Prep*		Hebrew reading exercise	
	12/13	**Exam 3**			

XI.   SELECTED COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

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