

Hebrew Exegesis OT5150
Spring 2026
Tuesdays 8 AM – 10 AM, 11-12 noon

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I. Course Description

This course introduces basic tools for interpreting the Old Testament. Attention is given to a working knowledge of biblical Hebrew and to principles of interpretation as they inform effective preaching and teaching of the Old Testament.

II. Course Goals

- A. To increase the student's grasp of basic vocabulary.
- B. To strengthen the student's competence in translation.
- C. To equip the student to handle the issues of Hebrew syntax.
- D. To be able to use the textual apparatus of BHS in analyzing textual variants.
- E. To develop a method for using Hebrew in exegesis and sermon preparation.

II. Textbooks

A. Students may already have the following books, which are required:

- 1) A Hebrew Bible: *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) which has the Masora and the textual apparatus (most reading Bibles do not have the Masora and textual apparatus)
- 2) W. L. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*

B. Other Required Books:

- 1) Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018)
- 2) E. R. Brotzman and Eric J. Tully, *Old Testament Textual Criticism*, 2nd ed. (Baker, 2016)
- 3) Steven D. Mathewson, "Appendix B: Using Hebrew in Narrative Exegesis," in *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative*, 2nd ed. (APOTN); **made available to students; the appendix in the 2nd ed. is a little different than the first ed.**
- 4) *The Trinity Psalter*, Crown and Covenant Publications, 1994: purchased through the RTS Charlotte bookstore

C. Recommended:

- 1) Todd J. Murphy, *Pocket Dictionary for the Study of Biblical Hebrew* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003): this is a useful reference guide for unfamiliar terms you may run into while studying Hebrew in seminary but also after seminary
- 2) Mark D. Futato, Sr., *Basics of Hebrew Accents* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2020)
- 3) Recommended for students without a computer program:
 - a) Tod S. Beale, *Old Testament Parsing Guide*
 - b) Benjamin Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*
 - c) Wigram, *The New Englishman's Hebrew Concordance*, or it may be titled *The Englishman's Hebrew Concordance of OT*

III. Basic Course Structure

A. Hebrew Exegesis is set up as a 3-hour lab to give the quiz in class and to allow more time for classroom participation in reading the Hebrew, translating the text, and discussing the grammar of the text.

B. Quizzes: the quizzes will be given at the beginning of class. The quizzes will cover vocabulary, translation, and parsing. Twelve quizzes will be given; the lowest quiz grade will be dropped. If a student is late to class, the professor reserves the right to not allow the student to take the quiz or to deduct points from the quiz.

C. Vocabulary: for Hebrew 1-2 you have learned vocabulary that occurs 70 times in the Hebrew Bible. For Hebrew Exegesis you will learn an additional 145 words that will cover words used in the Hebrew Bible 50 times. The words you need to know are listed in *The Vocabulary Guide to Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic*, Miles Van Pelt and Gary D. Pratico (Zondervan, 2019), **numbers 507-652**, or you can use the vocabulary cards by Pratico and van Pelt (*Old Testament Vocabulary Cards*) or use the handout on vocabulary in the mega-syllabus. Vocabulary is cumulative.

D. Translation: a portion of Hebrew text will be assigned for each class with a Worksheet on the passage that needs to be completed. The Worksheet lists the reading for the week and includes grammar questions related to the passage you are translating that you answer primarily from the Arnold/Choi grammar. There will be a question each week on the quiz whether you completed 90% of the Homework Assignment (the reading and the worksheet questions).

Parsing: the following is what will be on the quizzes for parsing, and it basically follows the format of the Pratico and Van Pelt textbook:

<i>Form</i>	<i>Root</i>	<i>Stem</i>	<i>Aspect</i>	<i>PGN</i>	<i>Additives</i>
וַיִּקְטֹל	קטל	Qal	Impf not imp	3ms	wcs

E. An Exegesis Paper is required. It must include the justification of the translation of 7-8 verses of Hebrew (see the handout on "Basic Format of the Exegesis Paper"). We will cover in class how to write the exegesis paper. For sample Hebrew exegesis papers see Pen and Parchment, RTS Charlotte website:

<https://rts.edu/campuses/charlotte/students/pen-and-parchment/>. A paper written for another class cannot be used for your Exegesis paper in this class. **Either put on the title page or in an early footnote that you have not used this paper for another class** (minus 1 point if not included). The paper should be 15-25 pages and not to exceed 25 pages (not counting bibliography or any appendices).

F. The Final Exam will consist of two parts: one part will be definitions of exegetical and grammatical terms from the reading; these terms are in the mega-syllabus. The other part of the Final will be the translation of 8-10 verses from the Hebrew covered in your homework with only the use of a lexicon allowed.

G. Classroom participation is important and can be a factor in your final grade. Participation includes coming to class, reading the Hebrew text from BHS, translating the text, and participating in the discussion of the text. You must bring your Hebrew Bible to class. If you are regularly late, miss class, leave early, or are not well-prepared for class, it will impact your grade.

H. Although students may use a computer program to prepare homework, the results of the homework should be written/typed on paper which you can refer to in class. A computer program should not be used when going over homework in class. Thus, each student should record the results of their homework on a separate sheet of paper or a separate word document (parsing of verbs, translation of the verse, and any other questions on the Worksheet).

V. Grading

30%	Quizzes
40%	Exegesis Paper
20%	Final Exam
10%	Reading/Worksheet Questions (7%)/Classroom Participation (3%)

VI. Extensions Policy for Assignments: In extenuating circumstances, a deadline extension of **up to one week** may be granted at the discretion of the professor. Requests for extensions of **more than one week** must be submitted to the Registrar for consideration by the Academic Dean in consultation with the professor. Extensions are granted only for significant emergencies or unforeseen circumstances, and a grade

penalty may be applied. *All extension requests must be made **prior to the assignment deadline**.* No retrospective extensions will be granted.

VII. Internet Policy

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.

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.

VIII. Chapel Participation

One of the fundamental tenets of Reformed theology is the centrality of preaching. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones said, "The primary task of the Church and of the Christian minister is the preaching of the Word of God" (*Preachers and Preaching*, 19). For this reason, we believe weekly chapel is an integral part of seminary training. It is an opportunity to hear the word preached in the context of preparing for the ministry. Since this class meets on Tuesday morning, we will treat chapel as part of this class. Thus, all students in this class are expected to attend. Chapel runs from 10:00-10:30AM (after which class will resume at 11 AM). Please use the chapel time to particularly reflect upon the importance of the languages in preaching, even if the preacher does not directly refer to the Greek or Hebrew. Consider taking your Greek and Hebrew Bible to Chapel.

IX. Exam Policy (Midterm and Final Exams)**Student Instructions for Exams with LockDown Browser**

1. Install the LockDown Browser application on the computer you intend to use for exams, prior to sitting for the exam, using this link:
<https://download.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=998253613>
 1. This link is ONLY for RTS students and covers Mac and Windows applications.
 2. Be sure that you are able to log in to your Canvas account from the LockDown Browser before the day of the exam.
 3. If you use internet filtering software (for example, Covenant Eyes) you may need to disable it before beginning an exam with LockDown Browser. Some types of filtering software can block your computer's connection to Canvas. Also, please be sure to add an exception for our Canvas URL: <https://rts.instructure.com>
2. The exam proctor should not be a current RTS student (current = taken a class within the past year but not yet graduated) or a member of the library staff.
3. The proctor must observe the student taking the exam and ensure that there are no devices or resources available other than the computer being used for the exam.
4. Access the exam during the date window specified for that exam.
 - a. Sign in with the proctor.
 - b. Start the LockDown Browser application using a wired or known reliable Wi-Fi connection. We do not recommend using restaurant or coffee shop Wi-Fi to take exams.
 - c. Have your student ID number and proctor details available to input into the exam.
 - d. Log in to your Canvas account.
 - e. Navigate to the exam. You will not be able to access the exam with a standard web browser. For additional details on using LockDown Browser, review this [Student Quick Start Guide \(PDF\)](#).
 - f. The time clock will begin once you open the exam.
 - g. The exam must be completed in one sitting. You may not exit and return to the exam later.
 - h. The exam will contain questions regarding an honor pledge, and certification that your proctor was present during the entire exam period.
 - i. Sign out with the proctor.
5. Proctors may be contacted to verify information regarding exam administration.
6. In the rare case of a technical issue (for example, if power goes out during exam) the proctor will document the date and time when the issue was reported. Once you open the exam using the LockDown Browser, you will not be able to access other programs on your computer.



Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Hebrew Exegesis (OT 5150)
 Professor: Richard P. Belcher, Jr.
 Campus: Charlotte
 Date: November 2025

MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes <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> <i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i>		Rubric • Strong • Moderate • Minimal • None	Mini-Justification
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	This would be relevant to the Exegesis paper written for this class
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	students are able to exegete Scripture at the level of the original language, to do research at that level, and to formulate original meaning and modern meaning
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Minimal	Exegesis does have implications for RT in the papers and discussions of texts in class
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Minimal	open each class with devotion and singing of a psalm
Worldview	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	
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-Christians.	Moderate	there is an emphasis on moving from the text to the sermon