

Biblical Aramaic

01OT6105S (2 credits)

Spring
2026

Instructor

Miles V. Van Pelt
mvanpelt@rts.edu

Wednesdays, 9:00–11:00 AM (CST)

Course Description

An introduction to the language of Biblical Aramaic, including basic grammar, syntax, and vocabulary (2 credit hours). Prerequisites: Hebrew 1, Hebrew 2, and massive amounts of excitement!

Course Protocols

1. **Grading Schedule.** The letter grading scale for this course is summarized below.

95-100%	A	83-85%	B
90-94%	A-	80-82%	B-
86-89%	B+	0-79%	F

2. **Attendance and Late Assignments.** Language acquisition can be a difficult task and requires constant vigilance in the beginning stages. Students are required to attend every class session and to arrive in class before the listed start time. There are generally no make-up quizzes, so don't miss class! In the instance of a missed quiz, students may drop their lowest quiz score during the semester. Make up quizzes are permitted in cases of emergency or severe illness.
3. **Method of Instruction.** The emphasis in this class is student performance. Students must come to class each day prepared and ready to participate in the instructional process. This means that all of the assigned reading from the grammar and all of the assigned homework from the workbook must be completed by the beginning of the class period for which it is assigned (see COURSE SCHEDULE below). Failure to comply will inhibit acceptable performance and impede the benefit of the classroom experience for other students.
4. **Special Needs.** In order to ensure full class participation, any student with a disabling condition requiring special accommodations (e.g. tape recorders, special adaptive equipment) is strongly encouraged to contact the professor at the beginning of the course.
5. **Electronic Aids.** No computers, recording devices, or electronics are permitted for use in class, except for those attending via Zoom.
6. **Disclaimer.** This syllabus is intended to reflect the learning objectives, instructional format and other information necessary for students to appraise the course. However, during the course of the semester, the instructor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus as may appear necessary during the course of the semester.

Course Requirements

1. **Homework.** Homework will be assigned each week. This homework will not be collected and will not be graded. Homework is the training ground for proficiency in the language and students desiring to master the language will complete all of the homework each week as assigned by the professor as detailed in the course schedule below.
2. **Vocabulary Quizzes.** Each week during the first half of the course there will be a vocabulary quiz at the beginning of class that covers the vocabulary from the chapters assigned for the week (30% of course grade).
3. **Tests.** There will be two major examinations this term (see schedule below). Total exam scores constitute 70% of the term grade (35% of course grade for each exam).
4. **Zoom Interactions** (if applicable). There will be 5 student to professor and 4 student to student interactions through Canvas for Zoom students. These interactions constitute 1% of the course grade.

Course Resources

Required Aramaic Resources

Van Pelt, Miles V. *Basics of Biblical Aramaic: Complete Grammar, Lexicon, and Annotated Text*. Zondervan, 2011.

Other Recommended Aramaic Resources

Callahan, Scott. N. *Biblical Aramaic for Biblical Interpreters*. Wilmore, KY: Glossahouse, 2021.

Greenspahn, Frederick E. *An Introduction to Aramaic*, 2nd edition. Missoula: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003.

Johns, Alger F. *A Short Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*. Revised edition. Andrews University Press, 1972.

Jumper, James N. *A Short Grammar of Biblical Aramaic: An Annotated Answer Key*. Andrews University Press, 2003.

Köhler, L., W. Baumgartner, and J. Stamm. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Study Edition. 2 vols. Translated and edited by M.E.J. Richardson. Boston: E. J. Brill, 2001.

Rosenthal, Franz. *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*. Otto Harrassowitz, 1961.

Schuele, Andrew. *An Introduction to Biblical Aramaic*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012.

Steinmann, Andrew E. *Fundamental Biblical Aramaic*. Concordia, 2004.

Van Pelt, Miles V. *Basics of Biblical Aramaic Video Lectures: A Complete Course for the Beginner*. Zondervan, 2014.

Course Schedule

Week	1	January 28	Lecture BBA 1-3
	2	February 4	Lecture BBA 4-7
	3	February 11	Lecture BBA 8-11
	4	February 18	Lecture BBA 12-14
	5	February 25	Lecture BBA 15-17
	6	March 4	Lecture BBA 18-20
	7	March 11	Spring Break!
	8	March 18	BBA 21-22
	9	March 25	Exam 1: BBA 1-22
	10	April 1	Daniel 2
	11	April 8	Daniel 3
	12	April 15	Daniel 4
	13	April 22	Daniel 5
	14	April 29	Daniel 6-7
	15	May 6	Exam 2: Daniel 2:4b-7:28

Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Biblical Aramaic (sync)
 Professor: Miles V. Van Pelt, Ph.D.
 Campus: RTS Jackson
 Date: Spring 2023

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u> <p>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.</p>		<u>Rubric</u> <input type="radio"/> Strong <input type="radio"/> Moderate <input type="radio"/> Minimal <input type="radio"/> None	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
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.	Minimal	1. Learn English grammar while learning Aramaic grammar
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	1. Working with Aramaic OT Grammar 2. discussion of exegetical issues
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Minimal	1. Discuss the Reformed tradition's view of use of original languages
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	1. Scripture memorization in class 2. Why else would someone study Aramaic
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Minimal	1. Better skill with Scripture enhances ability to conform life to God's Word.
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.)	none	
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Minimal	1. Occasionally show exegetical and preaching angles while working on grammar 2. Aramaic grammar ultimately should affect sermon preparation
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	None	
Shepherd	Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.	minimal	1. An increase in ability to read and interpret Scripture should promote shepherding.
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	minimal	1. An increase in ability to read and interpret Scripture should promote better interaction with the world..