

Dr. Gordon Johnston
Office: Todd 219
Email: gjohnston@dts.edu
Dallas Theological Seminary

OT 103C Hebrew Exegesis and OT I
Fall Session 2018 (3 hrs)
Wednesday/Friday 9:10—10:25 AM
Todd 217

OT103C Course Syllabus

Hebrew Exegesis and Old Testament Introduction I

Wednesdays/Fridays 9:10—10:25 AM, Todd 217

Dr. Gordon Johnston, Professor of Hebrew Studies

*“Keep hard at the biblical languages, for they are the sheath
in which the sword of the Spirit rests.” –Martin Luther*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the exegesis of Hebrew narrative, including an introduction to textual criticism and to the basic tools and methods of lexical analysis, as well as a review of Hebrew morphology and syntax in conjunction with translation of the Book of Ruth. The course will also include a survey of the historical, cultural, literary, and theological backgrounds of the Old Testament and an introduction to various forms of Old Testament criticism.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- *Cognitive Objectives*—In addition to reviewing the basics of biblical Hebrew introduced in OT101-102, this course is designed to introduce students to an exegetical process for interpreting Old Testament narrative literature. The course will also introduce the student to the historical, cultural, literary, and theological background of the Old Testament, particularly in building a case for the historicity the Old Testament in the public square.
- *Affective Objectives*—As a result of this course, our hope is that you will gain (1) greater facility in reading and analyzing biblical Hebrew, (2) appreciation of the importance of doing exegesis in the original text of the Hebrew Scriptures, (3) confidence in your ability to think through important interpretive issues, and (4) appreciation for the importance of understanding the backgrounds as a foundation for interpreting the Old Testament.

COURSE TEXTBOOKS

Required Texts: Hebrew Exegesis

- Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
- Ellis Brotzman, *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*. 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2016).

- Robert B. Chisholm, Jr. *A Workbook for Intermediate Hebrew: Grammar, Exegesis, and Commentary on Jonah and Ruth* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006).
- Robert B. Chisholm, Jr., *From Exegesis to Exposition: A Practical Guide to Using Biblical Hebrew* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998).
- Karl Elliger and Walter Rudolph, *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1984).
- Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, Johann Jakob Stamm, eds. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 2 volumes (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2011).

Required Texts: Old Testament in the Public Square

- Kenneth A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003. ISBN 978-0802849601
- John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006.

Recommended Texts

- Craig C. Broyles, Craig C., ed. *Interpreting the Old Testament: A Guide for Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001).
- Francis Brown, S.R. Driver and C.A. Briggs. *A Hebrew & English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Reprint edition; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1979).
- A.E. Cowley, ed. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar. Edited and Enlarged by E. Kautzsch*. 2nd English edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910.
- Willem VanGemeren, ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997)
- J. de Waard, P. B. Dirksen et al., eds., *General Introduction and Megilloth*, fascicle 18 of *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004)
- Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990).
- Ronald J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax: An Outline* (reprint edition; Toronto: University of Toronto: 1967). ISBN 0802014518, 9780802014511

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course consists of two hours of Hebrew Exegesis in biblical narrative (through guided assignments in the Book of Ruth) and one hour of Old Testament in the Public Square. The student may not take one portion of the course and not the other. The course requirements and proportion of course grade reflects a two-thirds and one-third ratio. To be eligible to pass the course, the student must earn passing grades both in the Hebrew Exegesis portion, as well as the Old Testament in the Public Square portion of the course.

Course Requirements: Hebrew Exegesis (65%)

1. Proficiency Exam (Pass/Fail)

- At the beginning of the third day of class, students will take a 30-minute proficiency exam to review OT101-102 material. The exam will consist of three parts: (1) reproduce five forms drawn from the following Qal strong/regular verb paradigms: perfect conjugation of any person, gender, and number; imperfect conjugation of any PGN; imperative masculine singular; infinitive construct; active participle masculine singular; (2) parse ten verbs from the Book of Jonah, excluding Jonah 2; and (3) translate two sentences from the Book of Jonah, excluding Jonah 2.
- If you score 86 or above, your final course grade will be raised by: (a) two points for a grade in the A range (94-100), or (b) one point for a grade in the B range (86-93). If you fail to score 70% on this exam, you will be required to meet with a departmentally approved tutor until you have passed a makeup exam. The makeup exam cannot be taken until you have spent at least four hours working with a tutor, who must sign a statement that you have done so and submit it to the professor. *Failure to complete this exam will result in the course grade being lowered by one letter grade.*

2. Hebrew Translation Assignments: Book of Ruth (10%)

Each student must complete Hebrew translation assignments in the Book of Ruth according to the schedule. Each translation assignment must be completed prior to the beginning of the class period for which it is scheduled. The student must keep a careful record of the completion of the translation assignments. Completion of the translation assignments in the Book of Ruth will count 10% of the final course grade.

3. Book of Ruth Workbook (10%)

Each student must complete ten (10) of thirteen (13) assigned sections for the Book of Ruth in Robert Chisholm, *Workbook for Intermediate Hebrew* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006). For the Ruth assignments, each student must complete (a) 50% of the questions for *Step Two* and (b) all the questions for *Step Three*. You need not do *Step One* or *Step Four*. Please check your answers for *Step Two* with the answers provided in the teacher's guide in the workbook and note errors and corrections in red pen. Though these

assignments will not receive a numerical grade, it is important that you do them properly to master the material for each class period and to prepare for the Hebrew translation/parsing quizzes. For each assignment that is incomplete (less than 50% of answers completed for step two and/or step three omitted or incomplete), your final grade will be reduced by one percentage point. You must submit your workbook to the professor on the last day of class. The ten completed assignments will count 1% each for a total of 10% of the final course grade.

4. Translation/Parsing and Syntax Quizzes (10%)

Each student will take ten (10) of twelve (12) scheduled translation /parsing quizzes on the Book of Ruth, according to the course schedule. Each quiz will cover one (1) of the three (2) verses listed in the course schedule. The student will be asked to translate the verse as well as to parse selected verbs. The quiz will begin promptly at the beginning of the class period and students will be given a maximum of five (5) minutes to complete the quiz. Any student who arrives late will not be given extra time to take the quiz—make sure you arrive on time. The two (2) lowest grades (including quizzes missed due to absence) will be dropped. The ten (10) highest grades will be counted with each quiz counting 1 point for a total of 10% of the final course grade.

5. Hebrew Word Study Assignments (20%)

- *Word Study #1:* Each student must complete the word study assignments on Ruth. For instructions, see handout for Word Study Assignment #1 on Canvas. This assignment will count 10% of the final course grade. See the course schedule for the due date for this assignment.
- *Word Study #2:* Each student must complete the word study assignment on Genesis 6:5-13, which will consist of two parts: (1) For part 1, see Chisholm, *From Exegesis to Exposition*, 55-56. (2) For part 2, write a one-page critique of the essay by Mark Driscoll, “Noah Was Not a Righteous Man,”<http://theresurgence.com/2014/03/24/noah-was-not-a-righteous-man>. This assignment will count 10% of the final course grade. See the course schedule for the due date for this assignment.

6. Textual Criticism Assignments (15%)

Each student must complete the two textual criticism assignments in the Book of Ruth. For instructions, see the handouts for Textual Criticism Assignment #1 and #2 on Canvas. The average of the two grades will count 15% of the final course grade. See the course schedule for the due dates for Textual Criticism Assignment #1 and #2.

Course Requirements: Old Testament in Public Square (35%)

1. Reading Assignments (10%)

Each student must complete the reading assignments (K.A. Kitchen and John Walton) according to the course schedule. All reading assignments must be completed by the beginning of the class period they are due. You must complete 90% of the reading to qualify for an A, 80% to qualify for a B, and 70% to qualify for a C. If you complete 90% of the reading assignments on time (prior to the class period for which they are assigned), your final course grade will be raised by two points. The course textbook reading report will be due on the last day of class: see course schedule for the precise date.

2. Old Testament in Public Square Project (25%)

Each student will research/write a paper addressing an issue addressing Old Testament in the Public Square. Each paper should be 8-10 pages in length, doubled-spaced (12-point fonts), following Turabian style, plus works cited bibliography. The paper should be accurate, succinct, well written and easy to grasp. The essay should be written with the two audiences in mind: (1) the content of the paper should be written with the Christian college student in mind whose faith in the reliability of the Old Testament is being challenged by the secular academy; and (2) the footnotes and documentation should be written with the elite academic audience in mind. The paper will count 25% of the course grade. This paper will be due at the beginning of the thirteenth week of the semester. See the course schedule for the due date of this paper. Choose one (1) of the following thirteen (13) individual options below:

1. *Historical/Archaeological Challenges*

- the lack of archaeological evidence for the period of the patriarchs
- the "impossibly" large number of the Hebrews in the exodus/conquest
- the lack of direct historical/literary evidence of the Hebrew sojourn in Egypt
- the lack of direct historical/literary evidence for the Hebrew exodus out of Egypt
- the challenge of archaeological support related to Israelite conquest of Canaan
- the claim of the lack of evidence for the united monarchy in the 10th century BC

2. *Comparative Religious Challenges*

- the similarity of the Israelite cultic (priestly) system to ANE cultic systems
- the similarity of the Mosaic case-laws to ANE case-laws (e.g., Hammurabi's Laws)
- the origin of Israelite monotheism in the context of Canaanite polytheism

3. *Moral Ethical Challenges*

- ethical questions related to Israelite conquest (genocide) of the Canaanites
- ethical questions related to capital punishment in the Mosaic Law
- ethical questions related to corporeal punishment (striking, beat) Israelite children
- ethical questions related to the institution of slavery in ancient Israel

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR STAGE ONE DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Any student in the Stage One Ph.D. program must complete additional requirements for Stage One Ph.D. students: (1) read 20 additional verses in Hebrew narrative; and (2) read additional 500 pages of OTI-related material. For a recommended list of the additional chapters in Hebrew narrative, please see the secretary of the Ph.D. Studies Program. Please consult with the professor about these additional requirements during the first week of the course. The student must report completion of these additional requirements by the last week of the semester.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

DTS does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the operation of any of its programs and activities. In order to avoid discrimination, the student is responsible for informing the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities and the course instructor/professor of any disabling condition that will require modifications.

GRADE SCALE

A+ 99-100	A 96-98	A- 94-95	B+ 91-93	B 88-90	B- 86-87	
C+ 83-85	C 80-82	C- 78-79	D+ 75-77	D 72-74	D- 70-71	F 0-69

COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADING

1. *Hebrew Exegesis: 2 credits (65%)*
 - Hebrew Translation Assignments: Book of Ruth 10%
 - Hebrew Workbook Assignments on Book of Ruth 10%
 - Hebrew Translation/Parsing Quizzes 10%
 - Hebrew Word Study Assignments: 2 @ 10% each 20%
 - Hebrew Textual Criticism Assignments: 2 @ 7.5 % each 15%
2. *Old Testament in Public Square: 1 credit (35%)*
 - Course Textbook Reading 10%
 - Old Testament in Public Square Paper 25%

COURSE POLICIES

Completion of Written Assignments

When doing the various assignments remember this is graduate school. All questions should be answered in complete sentences (not with a mere “yes” or “no”) and every assertion must be supported (even if the question does not specifically say “explain”). Some questions are supplemented by leading questions designed to help you answer the main question. However, this is not always the case. In other instances you will need to use logic and common sense to determine what steps are necessary to solve a problem.

Plagiarism

Be aware of the seminary's policy regarding plagiarism (see latest edition of the Student Handbook). If you need further clarification on what constitutes plagiarism, please see me privately. Note carefully that plagiarism is not just quoting someone without giving credit; it can also take the form of stealing another's *ideas* without giving them their due.

You may not consult with other students or even look at their work when doing the assignments. Something can be said for the benefits of teamwork, but in a ministry context, which we are attempting to simulate, you will rarely have the opportunity to consult with others when studying for your next sermon or lesson. You must develop a certain degree of independence in your research and work. However, you may consult commentaries and other published works when doing the assignments, except for sources specifically prohibited for certain assignments. It should go without saying that you may not consult the work of students who have already had the course.

Digital Recording of Classes Prohibited

Classes where we are scheduled to go over written assignments may not be taped, with the exception of the workbook assignments on Ruth. Also, class periods in which we are dealing with Old Testament in Public Square topics may not be taped.

Late Assignments

All assignments must be submitted at the beginning of the class session for which they are due. If a paper is handed in late, it will be penalized one full grade increment (for example, B+ to C+) for each day it is late. If the paper is completed by class time, you may email it to the professor prior to class, in which case it will be considered on time.

Absences

Four unexcused absences are allowed without penalty. Each unexcused absence beyond this number will result in a reduction of the final grade in accordance with the student handbook policy. If a prolonged illness keeps you from attending class, or work and ministry responsibilities conflict with the scheduling of this course, you should drop the course and take it at a more convenient time. You will be charged with an absence for every three classes you are late. You are officially late if you enter the classroom five or more minutes after the class officially begins.

COURSE SCHEDULE (See Separate Document)