

Syllabus for Old Testament 103
HEBREW EXEGESIS AND OLD TESTAMENT INTRODUCTION I

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Catalog Description

“An introduction to the exegesis of Hebrew narrative, including an introduction to textual criticism, 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.” *3 semester hours.*

Aims and Objectives of the Course

This course is designed to provide students with a basic knowledge of the primary tools and methods needed to begin learning an exegetical process for Old Testament studies. The specific objective of the course is to introduce students to a method for doing exegesis in the narrative portions of the Hebrew Bible. The course will also provide an introduction to selected aspects of Old Testament history and criticism. As a result of this course, the diligent student will be able to do the following things with a reasonable degree of confidence.

1. Evaluate variants in the Hebrew text for the passages we will study in order to establish the best reading wherever the original text is in question. This will require learning how to use the critical apparatus of *BHS* and/or *BHQ* and developing a general understanding of text-critical procedures for Old Testament studies. Students will gain a limited amount of experience in the praxis of Old Testament textual criticism. This course will provide a basic introduction to textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible.
2. Evaluate the precise meaning of each term in the text for the passages we will study. This will require learning how to use the various Hebrew lexica and concordances and developing an understanding of proper procedures for lexical research.
3. Determine the meaning of figures of speech that appear in the passages we will study. This will require learning deductively the major categories for figures of speech and gaining inductive experience in classifying and interpreting specific examples that we will encounter.
4. Determine the morphological identity and syntactical function of each grammatical form in the text of the passages we will study. This will require study of the major categories of Hebrew syntax and practice in recognizing and properly interpreting these categories as they appear in the Hebrew Bible.
5. Analyze the structure of selected narrative texts according to their particular form (i.e., rhetorical and synthetic studies). This will require learning the major rhetorical elements found in the passages that we will study.
6. Determine the theological message of a narrative passage and its correlation to the larger fields of biblical and systematic theology.
7. Apply the message of a narrative passage to the believing community (i.e., expositional and homiletical studies). This will involve some practice in making the sermonic transition from an ancient text to a modern audience.

Requirements for the Course

1. *Reading requirements (10%)*. Students will be expected to complete the reading of the textbooks, the assignments from the Hebrew Bible, and various handouts distributed in class in keeping with the schedule presented below. Failure to do so will have a negative impact upon the course grade. Several times during the semester, I will ask students to submit a reading report indicating timely completion of these assignments.

2. *The text of Deuteronomy 32:8 (10%)*. There is one text–critical assignment. It consists of ten questions that will guide the student in determining the correct reading of Deuteronomy 32:8. For a detailed explanation of this assignment, see the separate handout.

3. *Exegesis of the book of Ruth (40%)*. There are four exegetical study assignments on the book of Ruth. Each of these assignments has ten questions that focus on various aspects of a chapter of Ruth. These questions should be answered thoroughly and in a way that makes clear your methods of textual analysis. In cases where there are competing solutions to an exegetical or textual difficulty, you should evaluate the options before setting forth your own conclusions. All answers should be carefully validated with appropriate evidence, and you should indicate the sources (e.g., lexica, grammars, commentaries, etc.) that you have utilized in your research. Be especially careful to avoid all forms of plagiarism.

Note that for the purpose of these assignments the exegetical conclusion that you come to is of less concern to me than the methods by which you arrive at your conclusions. In completing these assignments, you may use Bible translations and commentaries, but do so in an evaluative way. Here, as in all the exegetical assignments, I want to see the results of *your* analysis of the text, and not merely that of other writers or commentators. Be careful to do your own thinking and as much as possible to form independent judgments. Avoid any uncritical use of sources.

All work should be done independently, without help from other students. Each assignment should be typed and should include a bibliography of resources consulted. Footnotes and bibliography should be in proper Turabian form.

4. *Vocabulary quizzes (10%)*. There will be ten quizzes over the Hebrew vocabulary of the book of Ruth. Eight of these quizzes will each cover about half a chapter of Ruth. Two of the quizzes will be cumulative, covering respectively chapters 1–2 and chapters 3–4 of Ruth. With the exception of the cumulative quizzes, your lowest score on the quizzes may be dropped. Any quiz missed due to an excused absence from class must be made up the day you return to class; otherwise the grade will be recorded as a zero.

5. *Examinations (30%)*. Students will be expected to translate and study the Hebrew text of the book of Ruth in accord with the attached schedule. There will be two examinations, each of which will cover two chapters of Ruth and assigned portions of Old Testament introduction. The section of the exams dealing with the book of Ruth will focus on translation, morphology, and syntax of the Hebrew text. The section of the exams dealing with Old Testament criticism will focus on information from class discussions and assigned readings in Dillard and Longman. No helps will be permitted when taking these exams.

Hebrew Proficiency Exam

On the third class period of the semester, there will be a thirty-minute Hebrew proficiency exam. It consists of three parts. You will be asked to do the following things. (1) Reproduce five forms drawn from the Qal strong/regular verb paradigms (i.e., perfect conjugation of any person,

gender, and number; imperfect conjugation of any person, gender, and number; imperative masculine singular; infinitive construct; active participle masculine singular). (2) Parse ten verbs from the book of Jonah (excluding Jonah 2). (3) Translate two sentences from the book of Jonah (excluding Jonah 2).

Stage 1 PhD Students

Students who take this course for credit in Stage 1 of the PhD program are subject to additional course requirements, as indicated in the PhD handbook. The faculty of the department of Old Testament Studies has established the following guideline for this purpose. Students who take OT103 for credit in Stage 1 of the PhD program must read an additional twenty chapters from narrative literature in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., a portion of the Former Prophets). A reading report should be submitted to the professor on the completion of each half of this reading assignment. The first report is due prior to the half-way point in the course; the second report is due prior to the end of classes. For further clarification, please speak to the professor outside of class.

Attendance

Regular class attendance is important for achieving the objectives of this course. You are allowed only four unexcused absences during the fall semester. If you choose not to attend class regularly, you will not receive credit for this course. Excessive absenteeism will result in a reduction of the final grade (see *Student Handbook*, 10–11).

Late Work

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date listed in the syllabus. Any work submitted after the beginning of the class session on the due date will be regarded as late. In fairness to the class as a whole, late work will be penalized by one letter grade for each week that it is late. Any clearly extenuating circumstances that necessitate submission of a late assignment should be brought promptly to my attention.

Student Assistance

I may be reached during normal working hours in my office at Todd Academic Center 201E. Appointments may be scheduled directly with me or through the secretary in the Old Testament office on the second floor of Todd Academic Center. My e-mail address is as follows: rtaylor@dts.edu. I may also be reached by telephone at the following number: 214.841.3654 (office). Tutorial assistance in Hebrew is available without charge through the tutor employed for this purpose by the Old Testament department. See the Old Testament bulletin board on the second floor of the Todd Academic Center for further information.

Course Extension Policy

Since the Seminary does not permit course extensions except in the most extenuating of unforeseen circumstances, it is mandatory that all work for this course be completed as scheduled. Please review the specifics of the no-extension policy as published by the Registrar's office. This institutional policy will be strictly enforced in all courses.

Course Supplemental Information

Dallas Theological Seminary does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the operation of any of its programs and activities. To avoid discrimination students are responsible for informing

the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities and the course instructor of any disabling condition that will require modifications.

Grading Scale

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

Texts

The following texts are required for this course and will be used on a regular basis.

Arnold, Bill T., and John H. Choi. *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Brotzman, Ellis R., and Eric J. Tully. *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016.

Koehler, Ludwig, and Walter Baumgartner. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated by M. E. J. Richardson. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Longman, Tremper, III, and Raymond B. Dillard. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006.

You will also need one of the following editions of the Hebrew Bible:

Elliger, K., and W. Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1977), or

Waard, J. de, P. B. Dirksen et al., eds. *General Introduction and Megilloth*. Fascicle 18 of *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004.

The following book is helpful for this course, but it is not required.

Chisholm, Robert B., Jr. *From Exegesis to Exposition: A Practical Guide to Using Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.

Since a significant portion of this course is devoted to exegesis of the book of Ruth, I strongly encourage students to add one or more commentaries on this book to their personal library. Helpful commentaries on the book of Ruth include the following. (For a fuller listing of commentaries on Ruth along with evaluative comments see John F. Evans, *A Guide to Biblical Commentaries and Reference Works*, 10th ed. [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016], 118–22.)

Block, Daniel I. *Judges, Ruth*. New American Commentary, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 6. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999.

Block, Daniel I. *Ruth: The King Is Coming*. Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament, ed. Daniel I. Block, vol. 8. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015.

Bush, Frederic W. *Ruth, Esther*. Word Biblical Commentary, ed. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker, vol. 9. Dallas: Word, 1996.

Campbell, Edward F., Jr. *Ruth: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes, and Commentary*. Anchor Bible, ed. William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman, vol. 7. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975.

Chisholm, Robert B., Jr. *A Commentary on Judges and Ruth*. Kregel Exegetical Commentary. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2013.

Eskenazi, Tamara Cohn, and Tikva Frymer-Kensky. *Ruth: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation*. JPS Bible Commentary. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2011.

Evans, Mary J. *Judges and Ruth: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, ed. David G. Firth, vol. 7. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2017.

Holmstedt, Robert D. *Ruth: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*. Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible, ed. W. Dennis Tucker Jr. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010.

Hubbard, Robert L., Jr. *The Book of Ruth*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament, ed. R. K. Harrison. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

LaCocque, André. *Ruth: A Continental Commentary*. Translated by K. C. Hanson. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004.

Nielsen, Kristen. *Ruth: A Commentary*. Translated by Edward Broadbridge. Old Testament Library. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1997.

Sasson, Jack M. *Ruth: A New Translation with a Philological Commentary and a Formalist-Folklorist Interpretation*. 2nd ed. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995.

Schipper, Jeremy. *Ruth: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Yale Bible, vol. 7. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016.

In addition to these works, the Hebrew reference grammars of GKC (i.e., Gesenius–Kautzsch–Cowley) and Joüon–Muraoka are a good investment for those who are serious about Old Testament studies, even though these grammars are not required texts for this course.

Class Schedule This class will meet Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:10–10:25 a.m. in Todd Academic Center 218.

August 28 Orientation to the course and introduction to exegetical method. Discussion of Old Testament text: diplomatic vs. eclectic editions. By the end of next week turn in a reading report for Brotzman and Tully's *Old Testament Textual Criticism*.

August 30 Discussion of Deuteronomy 32:8. Read Dillard and Longman, 13–62.

- September 4 Hebrew proficiency exam (thirty minutes). Discussion of transmission history (Sopherim, Naqdanim, Masoretes), major Hebrew manuscripts, ancient versions, canons of text criticism, text-critical method.
- September 6 Discussion of Old Testament canon: two models of canonization, antilegomena, deuterocanonical books, pseudepigrapha, tests of canonicity.
- September 11 Turn in text-critical assignment on Deuteronomy 32:8.
- September 13 Translate and study Ruth 1:1–5. Study *GBHS*, sections 1 (introduction), 2.1 (nominative), 2.2 (genitive), 2.3 (accusative).
- September 18 Translate and study Ruth 1:6–10. *Vocabulary quiz 1: Ruth 1:1–10.*
- September 20 Translate and study Ruth 1:11–16. Study *GBHS*, sections 2.4 (apposition), 2.5 (adjectives), 2.6 (determination), 2.7 (numerals).
- September 25 Translate and study Ruth 1:17–22. Turn in exegetical assignment 1. *Vocabulary quiz 2: Ruth 1:11–22.*
- September 27 Translate and study Ruth 2:1–5. Study *GBHS*, sections 3.1.1–2 (*qal, niphal*).
- October 2 Translate and study Ruth 2:6–11. *Vocabulary quiz 3: Ruth 2:1–11.*
- October 4 Translate and study Ruth 2:12–17. Study *GBHS*, sections 3.1.3–4 (*piel, pual*). Turn in reading report 1.
- October 9 Translate and study Ruth 2:18–23. Study *GBHS*, sections 3.1.5 (*hithpael*). Turn in exegetical assignment 2. *Vocabulary quiz 4: Ruth 2:12–23.*
- October 11 Review morphology and syntax of Ruth 1–2. *Cumulative vocabulary quiz: Ruth 1–2.*
- October 16 EXAM: Morphology and syntax of Ruth 1–2; portions of OTI.
- October 18 Discussion of documentary criticism of the Pentateuch: synopsis of the history of research, criteria for source division, identity of sources and their characteristics, Wellhausen’s understanding of the history of Israel. Read Dillard and Longman, 63–119.
- October 23 Discussion of Old Testament history (archaeological periods, key dates with their basis). Read Dillard and Longman, 120–66.
- October 25 Discussion of critical methods for Old Testament study: source criticism, form criticism, tradition criticism, rhetorical criticism, canon criticism.
- October 30 Translate and study Ruth 3:1–5. Study *GBHS*, sections 3.2 (aspect), 3.3 (modals), 3.4 (nonfinites), 3.5 (verbal sequences). Study *GBHS*, sections 3.1.6–7 (*hiphil, hophal*).

- November 1 Translate and study Ruth 3:6–9. *Vocabulary quiz 5: Ruth 3:1–9.*
- November 6 Translate and study Ruth 3:10–14. Study *GBHS*, sections 4.1 (prepositions), 4.2 (adverbs), 4.3 (conjunctions), 4.4–5 (particles).
- November 8 Translate and study Ruth 3:15–18. Turn in exegetical assignment 3. *Vocabulary quiz 6: Ruth 3:10–18.*
- November 12–16 Reading week. No classes.
- November 19–23 Thanksgiving recess. No classes.
- November 27 Translate and study Ruth 4:1–5. Study *GBHS*, sections 5.1 (nominal and verbal clauses), 5.2 (subordinate clauses), 5.3 (additional sentence types). Read Dillard and Longman, 167–223.
- November 29 Translate and study Ruth 4:6–9. *Vocabulary quiz 7: Ruth 4:1–9.*
- December 4 Translate and study Ruth 4:10–16. Turn in exegetical assignment 4.
- December 6 Translate and study Ruth 4:17–22. *Vocabulary quiz 8: Ruth 4:10–22.*
- December 11 Review of morphology and syntax of Ruth 3–4. *Cumulative vocabulary quiz: Ruth 3–4.* Turn in reading report 2.
- December 13 EXAM: Morphology and syntax of Ruth 3–4; portions of OTI.
- December 17–20 Final examinations.