

# OT514 Hebrew Syntax and Exegesis Spring 2023 — Phoenix Seminary

Instructor: Peter J. Gentry, Ph.D.

Contact Information: 602-429-4938

[pgentry@ps.edu](mailto:pgentry@ps.edu)

Office Hours: By Appointment

## OT514 SYLLABUS

### Course Description:

This course is designed to develop both method and skill in exegesis of the Hebrew Old Testament. This includes skills necessary for doing textual criticism, responsible lexical study, informed analysis of syntax and a growing sensitivity to matters of genre and historical background.

[3 credit hours. Prerequisites: OT512 and OT513]

### Course Objectives:

1. Learn good methodology for exegeting the Bible in Hebrew.
2. Learn textual criticism and how to use an apparatus to resolve textual problems..
3. Grow in proficiency with Hebrew through reading the Hebrew Old Testament.
4. Make informed and judicious use of the standard lexica.
5. Engage with advanced commentaries.
6. Produce an exegetical paper, exercising all the skills learned in the class.

### Course Readings and Texts:

Primary Sources. Employing only **grammars** and **lexicons** of Hebrew each student must read Isaiah 1:1-2:5, 4:2-6, 11, 46, 49-56, 60-62 in Hebrew. [NO COMPUTER PROGRAMS PERMITTED FOR ANALYSIS OF MORPHOLOGY]. Students are responsible for passages not read in class together. To read the Hebrew Text, the student must use:

Elliger, K., and W. Rudolph, et al., eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. 5th ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967/77, 1997.

Primary Sources in English. Read the entire prophecy of Isaiah in English employing a standard translation (e.g. ESV, NASB, NIV, NLT).

#### Reference Tools and Secondary Sources.

a) The following articles and books must be read in their entirety by students. Accountability for reading these texts will be given during the Final Examination.

Gentry, Peter J. "The Literary Macrostructures of the Book of Isaiah and Authorial Intent." In *Bind up the Testimony: Explorations in the Genesis of the Book of Isaiah* edited by Daniel I. Block and Richard L. Schultz (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2015), 227-254.

Gentry, Peter J. "The System of the Finite Verb in Classical Biblical Hebrew," *Hebrew Studies* 39 (1998) 7-39.

Gentry, Peter J. "The Text of the Old Testament," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*. 52/1 (2009): 19-45.

Stuart, D. *Old Testament Exegesis: A Primer for Students and Pastors*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1980, 1984, 2001.

Watson, Wilfred G. E. *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques*. JSOT Sup. 26. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984.

b) **Only Portions** of the following texts will be read as assigned by the **Class Schedule**.

Barthélemy, D. et al. *Preliminary and Interim Report on the Hebrew Old Testament Text Project*. Vol. 4, Prophetic Books II. New York: UBS, 1979.

Harrison, R. K. *Introduction to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969. Chapter on Isaiah, pp. 764-800.

Ross, Allen P. *Biblical Hebrew Handbook*. 2nd Edition, 1981. For Lexical Analysis, see pp. 558-656.

Tov, Emanuel. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*. 4th ed. Revised and Expanded. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2022.

Young, E. J. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964. pp. 202-227.

c) Grammatical Tools: students are expected to use at least two of the following grammars in the course of their exegetical work during the semester. I **strongly recommend** purchasing BHRG and GKC.

Beckman, John C. *Williams' Hebrew Syntax* (3rd Edition). Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007. Sometimes cited by Williams, and SECTION NUMBER (e.g. § 58).

Dallaire, Hélène M., Benjamin J. Noonan and Jennifer E. Noonan, eds. *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found? A Grammatical Tribute to Professor Stephen A. Kaufman*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2017. Abbreviated DNN.

Hardy, H. H., II. *Exegetical Gems from Biblical Hebrew: A Refreshing Guide to Grammar and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019.

Joüon, P. and T. Muraoka. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. Subsidia Biblica 27. Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 2006. Abbreviated J-M.

Kautzsch, E., ed. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. rev. by A.E. Cowley. 2nd. English ed. Oxford, 1910. Abbreviated **GKC**.

Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jacobus A. Naudé and Jan Kroeze. *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*. Second Edition. London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2017. Abbreviated **BHRG**.

Waltke, Bruce K. and M. O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990. Abbreviated IBHS.

d) Lexica & Exegetical Tools: students are expected to make use of at least **TWO** of the following lexica in doing exegetical work and in daily reading of the text. This may require extensive use of the **Reference Area in our Library**. These must be used in Hard Copy and by Thumb.

Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver and C. A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford, 1907.

Clines, David J. A., ed. *The Concise Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.

Clines, David J. A., ed. *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Vol. 1: א (1993), Vol. 2: ב-ג (1995), Vol. 3: ד-ה (1996), Vol. 4: ו-ז (1998), Vol. 5: ח-ט (2001), Vol. 6: י-כ (2007). Vol. 7: ל-מ (2010). Vol. 8: נ-ס (2012). Vol. 9: Index (2016). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993-2016.

de Hulster, Izaak J., Brent A. Strawn, and Ryan P. Bonfiglio, eds., *Iconographic Exegesis of the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament: An Introduction to Its Method and Practice*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015.

Koehler, L., W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated and edited by M. E. J. Richardson. 2 Vols. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001.

Meyer, Rudolf, Herbert Donner, et al. *Gesenius 18 – Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament*. 18th Edition. Berlin: Springer, 2013.

Pritz, Ray. *The Works of Their Hands: Man-made Things in the Bible*. UBS Technical Helps; New York, UBS, 2009.

Sokoloff, Michael. *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic*. Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 2002.

Sokoloff, Michael. *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*. 2nd. ed. Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 1990, 2002.

Sokoloff, Michael. *A Dictionary of Judean Aramaic*. Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 2003.

Wendland, Ernst R. *Prophetic Rhetoric: Case Studies in Text Analysis and Translation*. 2nd ed. Dallas: SIL International, 2014. Only pp. 531-572.

e) Commentaries. The literature on Isaiah is immense. The following commentaries and studies may be useful:

Goldingay, John and David Payne. *Isaiah 40-55*. 2 Vols. ICC. London: T & T Clark, 2006.

Goldingay, John. *Isaiah 56-66*. ICC. London: T & T Clark, 2014.

Koole, Jan Leunis. *Isaiah III*. Volume 1. Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1997.

Koole, Jan Leunis. *Isaiah III*. Volume 2. Leuven: Peeters, 1997-2001.

Koole, Jan Leunis. *Isaiah III*. Volume 3. Leuven: Peeters, 1997-2001.

Korpel, Marjo C. A. and Johannes C. de Moor. *The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry: Isaiah 40-55*. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Motyer, J. A. *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1993.

Motyer, J. Alec. *Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999.

Oswalt, John N. *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39*. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.

Oswalt, John N. *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

Smith, Gary V. *Isaiah 1-39*. The New American Commentary 15A. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2007.

Smith, Gary V. *Isaiah 40-66*. The New American Commentary 15A. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2009.

Webb, Barry G. *The Message of Isaiah*. The Bible Speaks Today. Downers Grove: IVP, 1996.

Young, E. J. *The Book of Isaiah*. 3 Vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962, 1969, 1972.

The following works deal with the Septuagint of Isaiah:

Baer, David A. *When We All Go Home: Translation and Theology in LXX Isaiah 56-66*. JSOT Supplement Series 318. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001.

Ekblad, Eugene Robert, Jr. *Isaiah's Servant Poems According to the Septuagint: An Exegetical and Theological Study*. Contributions to Biblical Exegesis & Theology 23. Leuven: Peeters, 1999.

f) Helpful websites for OT Textual Criticism:

#### General

Online Bibles Without Apparatus (BHS, Rahlfs' LXX, Vulgate, NT):  
<http://www.academic-bible.com/en/online-bibles/>

#### Hebrew

Dead Sea Scrolls (1QIsa<sup>a</sup> et al.):  
<http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/>  
<http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/>

Aleppo Codex (Best MS, ca. 930 AD):  
<http://www.aleppocodex.org/>

Kennicott (for variants from Hebrew Medieval MSS)

Vol. 1: [http://dlib.nli.org.il/R/-?func=dbin-jump-full&object\\_id=531240&silos\\_library=GEN01](http://dlib.nli.org.il/R/-?func=dbin-jump-full&object_id=531240&silos_library=GEN01)

Vol. 2: [http://dlib.nli.org.il/R/-?func=dbin-jump-full&object\\_id=532319&silos\\_library=GEN01](http://dlib.nli.org.il/R/-?func=dbin-jump-full&object_id=532319&silos_library=GEN01)

-DeRossi (needed to get readings from the Hebrew Medieval mss)

Vol. 1:

<http://books.google.com/books/reader?id=tK0WAAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&pg=GBS.PR1>

Vol. 2:

<http://books.google.com/books/reader?id=33dBAAAACAAJ&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&pg=GBS.PR1>

Vol. 3:

[http://books.google.com/books?id=8XdBAAAACAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=Variae+lectiones+Veteris+Testamenti,+ex+immensa+mss.+editorumque+...,+Volume+3&hl=en&sa=X&ei=c42\\_UJzaFqaa2AXTyOCABQ&ved=0CDYQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=8XdBAAAACAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=Variae+lectiones+Veteris+Testamenti,+ex+immensa+mss.+editorumque+...,+Volume+3&hl=en&sa=X&ei=c42_UJzaFqaa2AXTyOCABQ&ved=0CDYQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q&f=false)

Vol. 4:

[http://books.google.com/books?id=-BuKcwllxVYC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Variae+lectiones+Veteris+Testamenti,+ex+immensa+mss.+editorumque+...,+Volume+4&hl=en&sa=X&ei=oo2\\_UJLgGc-\\_2QWow4HICw&ved=0CDMQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=Variae%20lectiones%20Veteris%20Testamenti%2C%20ex%20immensa%20mss.%20editorumque%20...%2C%20Volume%204&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=-BuKcwllxVYC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Variae+lectiones+Veteris+Testamenti,+ex+immensa+mss.+editorumque+...,+Volume+4&hl=en&sa=X&ei=oo2_UJLgGc-_2QWow4HICw&ved=0CDMQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=Variae%20lectiones%20Veteris%20Testamenti%2C%20ex%20immensa%20mss.%20editorumque%20...%2C%20Volume%204&f=false)

## Greek

New English Translation of the Septuagint (NETS)  
<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/>

Field's Hexapla (for Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion when no Göttingen Edition is available):

Vol. 1: <http://archive.org/details/origenhexapla01unknuoft>  
Vol. 2: <http://archive.org/details/origenhexapla02unknuoft>

## Latin

Whitaker's Words (Latin Parsing tool):  
<http://ablemedia.com/ctcweb/showcase/whitakerwords.html>

## Aramaic and Syriac

Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon (Aramaic Targums and Syriac Peshitta):  
<http://cal1.cn.huc.edu/>

g) Exegetical and Reference Tools. Students will want to check the following lists of exegetical and reference tools.

- a. Bibliography of Exegetical Tools (Gentry Handout and Stuart Chapter IV).
- b. Comprehensive Bibliographies for Isaiah are available online:

<http://courses.missouristate.edu/VictorMatthews/bib/ISAIAH-02.html>

[http://ancienthebrewpoetry.typepad.com/ancient\\_hebrew\\_poetry/2007/01/an\\_isaiah\\_bibli.html](http://ancienthebrewpoetry.typepad.com/ancient_hebrew_poetry/2007/01/an_isaiah_bibli.html)

2. *Assignments and Course Requirements.*

Faithful labour and learning on the part of the student should yield:

1. Hebrew Class Reading [10%], Secondary Readings [10%], and Final Exam [30%] [Outcomes 1, 3, 5-6]	an ability to read various genres in Hebrew. This ability will be tested in the Final Exam in preparation for which the student will be responsible for the readings in Hebrew.
2. Exegetical Paper [30%] [Outcomes 1-6]	an ability to exegete narrative and poetry in Hebrew. This will be measured by completing exegetical assignments and composing an exegetical paper.
3. Textual Assignment [5%] [Outcome 4]	an ability to read the textual apparatus in the BHS text and make informed decisions between variants. This will be measured by having the student practice textual criticism in: (1) an assignment on a particular problem (2) consulting The Preliminary Report for the passages read together (3) an assignment integral to the exegetical paper.
4. Lexical Assignment [5%] [Outcomes 1-2]	an ability to do a thorough lexical study through the careful use of available resource tools. This will be measured by: (1) an assignment in lexical analysis (2) two lexical studies in the exegetical paper.
5. Syntax Assignments [4 x 2.5 = 10%] [Outcome 5]	an ability to analyze Hebrew grammar and syntax. This will be measured by: (1) Four assignments in gross and fine grammatical analysis (2) Integration of these skills into the exegetical paper.

Recommendations on Buying Textbooks

I am well aware that the texts required for this course in exegesis are expensive. Each one has been carefully chosen as what one could well use as an important tool every week in a lifetime of ministry. I also require the same texts for all of my exegesis courses. Thus, the required texts can be used for more than one course. What books are really required for this course? Of highest priority in the following order: (1) Hebrew Bible, (2) Hebrew Lexicon (Hard Copy unless you are planning to go overseas), and (3) Hebrew Grammar (recommend GKC / BHRG). One can use our library for all other readings. Watson **will be** useful in the **future** as a reference work.

**Course Evaluation and Grading Scale:**

1 Lexical Assignment	05
1 Textual Assignment	05
4 Syntax Assignments	10
Hebrew Class Readings	10
Secondary Readings	10
Exegetical Paper	30
Final Examination	30
<hr/> Total	<hr/> 100

Grading Scale

96 – 100	A+	
90 – 95	A	Excellent
80 – 89	A-	
77 – 79	B+	
73 – 76	B	Good
70 – 72	B-	
67 – 69	C+	
63 – 66	C	Adequate
60 – 62	C-	
57 – 59	D+	
53 – 56	D	Marginal Pass
50 – 52	D-	

**Class Schedule:**

Class	Topics	Assignments, Preparation & Readings
Week 1	Course Overview	Syllabus Exegetical Resources/Tools R. K. Harrison, Chapter on Isaiah (764-800) E. J. Young 202-227
	Hebrew Reading	Isaiah 1:1-15
Week 2	Exegetical Method	Stuart, <i>O. T. Exegesis</i> , Chapters 1 and 2 Jason DeRouchie, Handout on Unity of Isaiah
	Hebrew Reading	Isaiah 1:16-31
Week 3	Textual Criticism	Lecture on Textual Criticism Gentry, "The Text of the Old Testament" <i>Preliminary Report</i> , v-xvii Tov, Textual Criticism, Chapters 3, 5–9
	Hebrew Reading	Isaiah 2:1-5; 4:2-6; 11:1-5
Week 4	Textual Criticism	Problem in Text Criticism Assigned
	Hebrew Reading	Isaiah 46
Week 5	Discussion Period	Problem in Text Criticism – <b>Hand In</b>
	Hebrew Reading	Isaiah 49:1-15

Week 6	Lexical Analysis	Methodology of Lexical Analysis Ross, <i>Biblical Hebrew Handbook</i> , 558-565.
	Hebrew Reading	Isaiah 49:16-50:3
Week 7	Lexical Analysis	Assignment in Lexical Analysis (Gen. 1:26) – <b>Hand In</b>
	Sentence Typology	BHRG, 47–65 Lecture on Sentence Typology
	Hebrew Reading	Isaiah 50:4-51:8
Week 8	Advanced Syntax	Verb: Tense, Aspect and Modality Gentry, “System of the Finite Verb” BHRG, 151–171; 188–199 Beckman, 56–95
	Sentence Typology	Sentence Typology Exercise #1 (Isaiah 51:1-4) – <b>Hand in</b>
	Hebrew Reading	Isaiah 51:9-23
Week 9	Advanced Syntax	Verb: Derivational Morphology BHRG 72-91 Beckman, 1-55
	Hebrew Reading	Isaiah 52:1-15
	Sentence Typology	Sentence Typology Exercise #2 (Isaiah 51:5–8) – <b>Hand in</b>
Week 10	Advanced Syntax	Bound Structure/Noun Phrases BHRG, 220–232 Beckman, 96–151
No Class		Prepositional Phrases BHRG, 323–378 Beckman, 152–211
	Hebrew Reading	Isaiah 53
Week 11	Syntactic Analysis – Discuss	Fine Syntactic Analysis Exercise #1 (Isaiah 51:1–4) – <b>Hand in</b>
	Reading	Isaiah 55
	Poetic Analysis	Waltke, “Figures of Speech” Handout
Week 12	Poetic Analysis	Fine Syntactic Analysis Exercise #2 (Isaiah 51:5–8) – <b>Hand in</b>



	Literary Structure	Lecture on O'Connor's Method
		O'Connor, <i>Hebrew Verse Structure</i> pp. 297-320
		Watson, <i>Classical Hebrew Poetry</i>
	Reading	Isaiah 56
Week 13	Literary Structure	Application of O'Connor's Method
		Making an Exegetical Outline
Week 14	Reading	Isaiah 57
		Gentry, "Literary Macrostructures of Isaiah"
Week 15	Final Exam	

### Notes

- a. In order to ensure full participation, any student with a disabling condition requiring special accommodations (e.g., tape recorders, special adaptive equipment, special notetaking or test-taking needs) is strongly encouraged to contact the professor at the beginning of the course.
- b. Guidelines for papers submitted in this course are found in the Southern Seminary Manual of Style available in the LifeWay Christian Bookstore located in the Honeycutt Center.
- c. Disclaimer: This syllabus is intended to reflect accurately the course description, content outline, course objectives, grading criteria, examination dates, policy on absences, course bibliography and other information necessary to appraise the course. During the course of the semester, however, the professor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus as may appear necessary because of events and circumstances that change during the semester.
- d. Students are respectfully requested to refrain from bringing drinks or food into the classroom in accordance to institutional policy.
- e. Signing up for this class includes a commitment to the Final Exam Schedule.