

Dr. Brian L. Webster, OT103DC
Office: Todd 205; online by appt.
Dallas Theological Seminary
bwebster@dts.edu

Intro. to Hebrew Exegesis (3cr)
Term: Fall 2020
Location: DTS Dallas campus
Time: Asynchronous

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREW EXEGESIS SYLLABUS

I. 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.

Prerequisite: NT101-102, OT101-102, or acceptable score on the advanced-standing exams.

Learning to do exegesis in the Hebrew Bible involves core skills for understanding God's word in order to then communicate it to others, reflect on it personally and theologically and engage scholarly works such as commentaries. In addition, you should learn to see the drama in Hebrew narrative that was part of the original communication of God's word.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Cognitive objectives. In addition to reviewing matters introduced in OT102, this course is designed to introduce you to an exegetical process for interpreting Old Testament narrative literature. For a more detailed discussion of the significance of this portion of the course see Chisholm, *From Exegesis to Exposition* pp. 7-12. The course will also introduce the student to the historical, cultural, literary, and theological background of the Old Testament.

Affective objectives. It is desired that students will (1) gain greater facility and confidence in reading and analyzing biblical Hebrew, (2) gain a greater appreciation for the importance of doing exegesis in the original text, (3) gain confidence in one's ability to think through interpretive issues, (4) gain appreciation for the importance of understanding the backgrounds of the Old Testament as a foundation for interpretation, and (5) gain confidence in a reasoned affirmation of the historicity and reliability of scripture.

III. COURSE TEXTBOOKS

A. Required

Brotzman, Ellis R. *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994.

Chisholm, Robert B., Jr. *A Workbook for Intermediate Hebrew: Grammar, Exegesis, and Commentary on Jonah and Ruth*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006.

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

Chisholm, Robert B., Jr. *Interpreting the Historical Books*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006.

Elliger, Karl, and Walter Rudolph. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1984.

Kitchen, Kenneth. *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann Jakob Stamm. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated by M. E. J. Richardson. 2 vol. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2002.

B. Additional resources of note:

- Bush, F. W. *Ruth/Esther*. Word Biblical Commentary. Volume. 9. Dallas: Word Publishers, 1996.
- Campbell, Edward. *Ruth*, AB. Garden City: Doubleday, 1975.
- Hubbard, Robert L., Jr. *The Book of Ruth*, NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.
- Pietersma, Albert. *A new English translation of the Septuagint: and the other Greek translations traditionally included under that title*. Turpin Library: BS742 .P54 2007.
- Ryken, Leland. *How Bible Stories Work: A Guided Study of Biblical Narrative, Reading the Bible as Literature* (Wooster, OH: Weaver Book Company, 2015)
- Taylor, Bernard A., *The analytical lexicon to the Septuagint: a complete parsing guide*. Turpin Library: BS744 .T38 1994; Reference collection.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**A. Textual Criticism Assignment**

The textual criticism module includes an assignment verifying that you can read the apparatus, analyze the different readings, and explain what each means in its context. This assignment is worth 5% of your grade. (There will be a few separate additional textual criticism problems in Ruth.)

B. Ruth Assignments

For each chapter of Ruth.

- You should do a minimum of 50% of step 2 in Chisholm's Workbook, check your work against the answers in the teacher's guide in the back, and note errors and corrections in red pen, then scan and upload your work. Though these assignments do not receive a numerical grade, it is important to do them correctly to master the material and prepare for the tests over Ruth. For each assignment that is incomplete, your final grade will be reduced by one numerical/percentage point. (Note: Dr. Chisholm's Workbook has four steps for the sections of Ruth. Step 1 does not require written work and Steps 3 and 4 will be represented in your clause layout translation for each chapter.)
- Read the relevant portion of Dr. Chisholm's commentary on Ruth (included in course files) for each section covered in class. You may also consult other commentaries to do your work in Ruth.

You should also read and consult Robert Chisholm, *From Exegesis to Exposition* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998).

You should also read and consult the relevant portions of the text critical commentary in Ellis Brotzman Robert Chisholm, *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994).

- Translate each chapter of Ruth in a formatted clause layout. Note that for Ruth 1, the Hebrew clause layout is provided (with explanatory video clips) and you simply fill in your translation correspondingly. You will make your own for chs 2-4. The clause layout gives each clause its own line and uses indentation to show subordination. For text of the narrator, as a general rule, all preterites (vayyiqtol) verbs should be out to the margin and all other clauses should be indented. Dependent clauses, such as אֲשֶׁר or כִּי clauses should be indented one level in relation to whatever clause they modify.

Exceptions: (1) when a non-vayyiqtol clause starts a scene, it should also be out in the margin, (2) when a vayyiqtol clause is continuing a subordinated clause instead of the main action line, it should be indented, (3) a long phrase or items in a list may be given their own line for visual purposes. For quotations, the entire block of reported speech will be indented in relation to the verb that introduces it. And within that block you should show main and subordinate clauses.

- Make a plot chart and one-page description of the narrative in each chapter of Ruth. Note that for Ruth 1, the plot chart will be provided as a sample (with explanatory video clips).
- Supplemental worksheets. For each chapter of Ruth, you will be asked a few questions about lexicography, textual criticism, syntax, or other interpretive issues. These may or may not already appear in Dr. Chisholm's Workbook, but are chosen to be sure that you practice these skills on specific interpretive problems.
- Tests. At the end of each chapter of Ruth there will be a test over that chapter, which will include translation, parsing and explanation of parsing, and interpretive questions. In the middle of the module there will be a practice quiz designed to show the kind of questions that may appear.

C. 8 Vocabulary Quizzes

The departmental vocabulary requirement includes the words used in the Hebrew Bible 100 or more times. The list of words is provided in a 6 page documents online. The quizzes start with page six and add an additional page until all six pages are being quizzed. Note that the tests over Ruth will only provide the vocabulary used less than 100 times in the Bible, whether or not other vocabulary in Ruth has been included on the vocabulary quizzes to that point.

D. OTI material.

The OTI material in OT103 focuses on the historicity and reliability of the Old Testament (while in OT104 it focuses on the composition and authorship of select books of the OT).

- Students should watch "The Bible's Buried Secrets" (which lasts nearly 2 hours.) prior to the first OTI lecture. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/ancient/bibles-buried-secrets.html>
- Students should read and consult Kenneth Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) in conjunction with Dr. Johnston's lectures and for their paper.
- Students will take four quizzes on OTI content, which will cover the broad/major idea of the videos, and do not require memorizing a lot of details.
- Students will write a research paper on one of the following topics addressing Old Testament and the Public Square:

Historical/Archaeological challenges:

- the "impossibly" large number of the Hebrews in the exodus/conquest
- the alleged lack of historical/archaeological evidence for the historicity of the Patriarchs
- the alleged lack of historical/literary evidence of Hebrew sojourn/exodus from Egypt
- the alleged lack of archaeological support related to Israelite conquest of Canaan
- the alleged lack of literary/archaeological support for the early monarchy of Israel

Comparative challenges:

- the continuity/discontinuity of the Israelite creation accounts to ANE creation myths
- the continuity/discontinuity of the Israelite cultic (priestly) system to ANE cultic systems
- the continuity/discontinuity of the Mosaic lawcode to ANE lawcodes (e.g. Hammurapi)
- the origin of Israelite monotheism in the context of ANE/Canaanite polytheism

The paper should be 10-12 pages (double spaced, 12-point font) plus works cited bibliography. The paper should be accurate, succinct, well written, and easy to grasp. The essay should be written with two audiences in mind: (1) the content 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 (including liberal religious schools); (2) the footnotes and documentation should be written with the elite academic audience in mind. The paper will count 25% of the course grade and be due at the beginning of finals week.

E. Proficiency Exam.

The proficiency exam is not an entrance exam. This purpose of this exam is measure the student's current proficiency and to identify if a student should get help, such as tutoring, to be successful in the course. It is not an entrance exam for the course.

The exam includes making forms of the strong verb, parsing verbs from Jonah, and translating verses from Jonah.

If a you score 90% or above, your course grade will be raised by one percentage point.

If a you score below 70%, you will be required to meet with a tutor until you have passed a makeup exam.

Failure to complete the exam at a passing score will result in the course grade being lowered by one letter grade.

V. COURSE SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

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

VI. COURSE POLICIES

A. Letter/Numerical Grade Scale

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

B. Weighing of Course Requirements for Grading

65% Ruth and Exegesis; 35% Old Testament Introduction

- 5% Textual Criticism Assignment.
- 12% Ruth Worksheets, Reading Assignments, discussions.
- 8% Vocabulary Quizzes
- 40% Ruth chapter tests.
- 10% OTI discussions, reactions, and readings.
- 25% OTI and the Public Square Paper.

C. Class Participation.

Collaboration can be a valuable learning tool. The course may include required online discussion forums or online meetings with an instructor and a small group of students. The latter is anticipated twice in the semester. The latter will be part of the grade factors that include discussions.

D. Late Assignments.

Assignments are due according to the schedule in Canvas. Do not look ahead in the videos for answers. Late assignments may be penalized up to one percent per day late.

E. Absences.

Viewing all class periods is expected as they are available on a flexible schedule.

VII. COURSE SCHEDULE (*subject to change*)

	Format	Saturday	Topic	Friday	Friday Quizzes
Module 1	live DC	1. 8/22	<i>Verb system</i> <i>Narrative genre</i>	8/28	Vocab 225+ Paradigms & Parsing
Module 2	live DC	2. 8/29	<i>Ruth 1</i>	9/4	Vocab :: 125+ <i>Proficiency Exam</i>
Module 3	online	3. 9/5	Textual Criticism	9/11	Vocab :: 100-224 Paradigms & Parsing
Module 4	live DC	4. 9/12	<i>Ruth 1</i>	9/18	Vocab :: 100+ Paradigms & Parsing
Module 5	online	5. 9/19	OTI 1	9/25	OTI Quiz1
Module 6	live DC	6. 9/26	<i>Ruth 2</i>	10/2	Voc Quiz5 :: 100+
Module 7	online	7. 10/3	OTI 2	10/9	<i>Ruth 1-2 Test</i> Text Criticism assignment
Module 8	live DC	8. 10/10	<i>Ruth 2</i>	10/16	Voc Quiz6 :: 100+
Module 9	online	9. 10/17	OTI 3	10/23	<i>Ruth 3 Test</i>
Module 10	live DC	10. 10/24	<i>Ruth 3</i>	10/30	Voc Quiz7 :: 100+
Module 11	online	11. 10/31	OTI 4	11/6	Voc Quiz8 :: 100+ Paradigms & Parsing
Module 12	live DC	12. 11/7	<i>Ruth 4</i>	11/7	<i>Ruth 4 Test</i>
Module 13	online	13. 11/14	OTI 5	11/14	Voc Quiz9 :: 100+
Module 14	live DC	14. 12/5	<i>Ruth 4</i>	12/5	
	online	15. 12/12	OTI paper		

The Canvas site will be modified to match this schedule.

	Format	Saturday	Topic	Friday	Friday Quizzes	
Module 1	live DC	1. 8/22	<i>Verb system Narrative genre</i>	8/28	Vocab 225+ Paradigms & Parsing	
Module 2	live DC	2. 8/29	<i>Ruth 1</i>	9/4	Vocab :: 125+ <i>Proficiency Exam</i>	
Module 3	online	3. 9/5	Textual Criticism	9/11	Vocab :: 100-224 Paradigms & Parsing	
Module 4	live DC	4. 9/12	<i>Ruth 1</i>	9/18	Vocab :: 100+ Paradigms & Parsing	
Module 5	online	5. 9/19	OTI 1	9/25	OTI Quiz1	
Module 6	live DC	6. 9/26	<i>Ruth 2</i>	10/2	Voc Quiz5 :: 100+	
Module 7	online	7. 10/3	OTI 2	10/9	<i>Ruth 1-2 Test</i> Text Criticism assignment	
Module 8	live DC	8. 10/10	<i>Ruth 2</i>	10/16	Voc Quiz6 :: 100+	
Module 9	online	9. 10/17	OTI 3	10/23	<i>Ruth 3 Test</i>	
Module 10	live DC	10. 10/24	<i>Ruth 3</i>	10/30	Voc Quiz7 :: 100+	
Module 11	online	11. 10/31	OTI 4	11/6	Voc Quiz8 :: 100+ Paradigms & Parsing	
Module 12	live DC	12. 11/7	<i>Ruth 4</i>	11/7	<i>Ruth 4 Test</i>	
Module 13	online	13. 11/14	OTI 5	11/14	Voc Quiz9 :: 100+	
Module 14	live DC	14. 12/5	<i>Ruth 4</i>	12/5		
	online	15. 12/12	OTI paper			