

Erskine Theological Seminary

HB602: Hebrew 4

Spring 2009

Due West: Fridays 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

3 Credit Hours

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Office Hours for Spring 2009

TBA; Other times by appointment. Additionally, for students taking Hebrew 4, I am willing to meet before or after class (we could eat lunch together and talk). Your participation is recommended but not required. ☺ Breakfast or lunch discussions are also encouraged. Scheduling appointments is recommended but not required. Scheduling an appointment may be advantageous for those traveling a distance.

Course Description

Selected readings in the Hebrew Old Testament continue to foster the student's facility in translation and further familiarity with classical Hebrew grammar.

Prerequisites: HB 501, 502, 601 (Biblical Hebrew I, II, and III). In order to receive exegesis credit for this course, students must have successfully completed BI 502 Principles of Exegesis prior to taking this class.

Exegesis/Elective. Three hours.

Course Purpose

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian church. As one component of preparing for that mission, increased competence in Biblical Hebrew is a powerful resource for Gospel preaching, teaching and ministry. The ability to read,

accurately interpret, and effectively minister with Hebrew Law and Poetry (the major genres of the OT after that of narrative) sensitively and well opens the door to have a deeper, more nuanced, and more faithful understanding of Scripture and Biblical Theology.

Course Objectives

- Review your Hebrew paradigms from Hebrew 1, 2 and 3.
- Continue to increase your ability to accurately read Hebrew orally.
- Further mastery of Hebrew vocabulary.
- Increase your ability to use advanced Hebrew lexicons profitably and with nuance, including genre and subgenre nuance.
- Continue to increase your understanding of how morphology, the verbal system and syntax function, including genre and subgenre verbal system and syntax. Your deepening understanding of grammar and syntax will be demonstrated by greater insight into the text and increasingly nuanced exegesis and translation.
- Discuss an intermediate level Hebrew grammar and prepare you to use advanced Hebrew reference works in the future.
- Increase your ability to read, comprehend, aesthetically appreciate, exegete, responsibly hermeneutically appropriate, and translate Hebrew legal and poetic texts¹ (practical wisdom, speculative Wisdom, Psalms, including subgenres, erotic love poetry, and prophetic texts) rounding out your knowledge of Hebrew.
- To introduce how to interpret Hebrew poetry and then model for the students (and develop and encourage their own) ability to read and interpret Hebrew poetry in its multiple dimensions..
- Further develop and apply your understanding of textual criticism and increase your insight and ability to profitably use the textual apparatus of your *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*.
- To equip students for their future study and use of legal texts, Poetic and Wisdom books as a personal, theological and ethical resource for their lives and others. For example, it would be difficult to overestimate the contribution that the Psalms have played in the life of the synagogue and the Christian church. It would be wonderful in the future to see the church increasingly benefit from legal texts and the Wisdom literature as well.

¹ This will include a growing appreciation that many of the dynamics and nuance of Hebrew poetry and the communicative efficiency and richness of this major genre disappear in English translation. ☺ The better your Hebrew becomes, the more you will perceive what has been there all along.

- To give students the opportunity for significant input regarding questions, content and issues that they want us to think through together and sustained opportunities for discussion as we read texts together.
- To aid students in continuing to develop biblical and theological analysis, research skills, rhetorical skills in leading discussions, critical thinking and evaluation, reading, writing and conversational skills.

Required Textbooks for Masters, MDiv and THM students (Note: Required textbooks may be ordered from the Erskine Seminary Online Bookstore at <http://www.ecampus.com/erskine>.)

Karl Elliger and Wilhelm Rudolph , *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. American Bible Society. This comes in three recommended choices: Hardcover Large Format 1987, Hardcover Small Format 1987; Hardcover Wide Margin Edition 2007.

Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, Basic Books, 1987.

Adele Berlin and Lida Knornina, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*, The Biblical Resource Series, Eerdmans Publishing, paperback.

Jan P. Fokkeleman, *Reading Biblical Poetry: An Introductory Guide*. Trans. I. Smit. Paperback, Louisville: Westminster John Knox. 2001.

Ronald J. Williams, *William's Hebrew Syntax, Third Edition, Revised and Expanded by John C. Williams*, 2007, paperback, University of Toronto Press.

In addition, invest in a lexicon you will never outgrow², namely, Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner. The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament, 2 volume set. ISBN: 9004124454, \$249 list, \$189.00 at www.amazon.com , \$199.20 at Eisenbrauns <https://www.eisenbrauns.com>.

Journal articles will frequently be distributed and discussed.

Additional Required Textbooks for ThM students

Christo H. J. Van Der Merwe , Jackie A. Naude and Jan H. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, Biblical Languages Series Number 3, 1999, Continuum Press, Paperback, 1850758565.

Further textbook TBA.

Course Requirements

² Hebrew Law and Poetry often use rare words or words with specialized lexical meanings and you need a lexicon that will deliver that for you.

Students are to be properly prepared for each class meeting having thoughtfully read all textbook materials and having worked hard and faithfully with the assigned Hebrew text of the day. Two pieces of work will be written. First, a paper on a text, chosen by you and approved by me, will be written to demonstrate the skill set learned³ and proficiency gained during the semester. This will *not* be a research paper in the normal sense, but rather to show your increasing ability to do independent work. All you can use for the paper is KB4/HALOT, your textbooks and assigned articles, and works on grammar and syntax as well as books and articles written on poetry that do *not* deal with your chosen text. The class is intended to build sufficient skills in you that you can grow those skills in a lifetime of use of the Hebrew Bible and will therefore be liberated to effectively use *and critique* commentaries and journal articles *after* your direct and focused encounter with the Hebrew Bible for teaching and ministry⁴. Second, a three to five page sermon or Adult Sunday School class paper based on the work done in your original paper and faithfully grounded in your research. Informed and prepared classroom discussion and interaction will be a crucial component of this course.

Conduct in Theological Discussions

Erskine Seminary is committed to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and it expects its students to show respect for all who identify with that one Church. In all written work, oral presentations, and discussions both inside and outside the classroom, the Seminary expects students to conduct discussions of controversial issues in a context of respect for those with whom one disagrees. Please see the Community Life Statement in the Catalog for more information.

Rules of Engagement in Class Discussion⁵

You are invited and encouraged to intellectually engage one another and your professor in this class! Thoughtful and vigorous discussion is crucial to this class. Learning Biblical Hebrew involves thoughtful and disciplined inquiry about the language in which 76% of Scripture was written in. Such learning and inquiry is best done in community, and there is no greater potential for productive interaction – interaction that is mutually beneficial and productive of real, valid, and worthwhile answers – than in a community of Christian scholarship. Recognizing that together we form a small community of truth-seekers devoted to Christ, his Kingdom and Scripture, let us commit ourselves to work together in a spirit of mutual respect and love. The following guidelines are proposed as some ground rules, or “rules of engagement,” for our class discussions and interaction:

- Deepening one’s understanding of another language requires being willing to make mistakes in learning the language. Try to remember this and relax. ☺
- Be humble, courteous, and respectful.
- Work hard to correctly understand the day’s assignments, the biblical text and one

³ This implies, among other things, demonstrating the increasing ability to not simply attempt to interpret verse by verse, but more importantly, the ability to understand and interpret *the entire poem!*

⁴ I cannot overstate how crucial and necessary the development of this ability is for effective, mature, biblically faithful ministry! ☺

⁵ These rules represent a slightly modified version of Dr. John Wingard’s rules. I’d like to thank my generous friend and former colleague for sharing them with me.

another.

- Try to articulate your thoughts as clearly as possible.
- Avoid personal attacks.
- Keep clearly in mind that our mutual goal is Truth, not personal gain or ego.
- Avoid monopolizing the conversation.
- Try to stay on topic.
- Welcome criticism and questions.
- Expect disagreement at times, and deal with it constructively when it arises.
- Be quick to apologize if you offend someone.
- Be equally quick to forgive if you are offended by someone.

Seminary Policies Related to Research Papers

Inclusive Language: The Seminary encourages all students to make use of language, in reference to human beings, that is inclusive rather than needlessly exclusive. It is a mark of a good communicator to build bridges rather than barriers; therefore, such language should be used in all written work and oral presentations. The Seminary Catalog stands as an example of recommended usage.

Language about God and Humanity

Although God transcends the distinction between male and female, the Bible and the Church's historic creeds and confessions use masculine language in reference to God. Thus, the Seminary encourages all students to retain this masculine usage when speaking and writing about God. Furthermore, the Seminary recognizes that all human beings, male and female, are created equally in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), and believers of both sexes are fellow heirs of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7). Accordingly, whenever students are speaking and writing about males and females, they should use language that clearly includes both men and women (for example, by saying/writing "humanity" rather than "man" or "people" rather than "men").

Style and Bibliographical Formatting Requirements

For the research paper, students are required to follow the form and style guidelines found in Turabian, *Manual for Writers* (7th edition). These guidelines are summarized in the Erskine Seminary document "Style and Form Standards for all Masters Level Programs," (Erskine Seminary). All papers must be typed/processed (twelve point type, double spaced, one-inch margins) and fully documented. In this course, footnotes and an appropriate bibliography are

required in each paper. The paper's cover page and bibliography are not counted towards page requirements.

Additionally, the final version of the paper will be submitted with a clear, easy to read font, such as Arial, Mangal, or Palatino Linotype. Papers will be printed on white paper and stapled or put in a binder. No unstapled papers will be accepted. Students will submit one printed copy in class and email me one electronic copy of their paper the same day. All papers will be due at the beginning of class on. In addition to handing in a printed copy please send me an electronic copy also in Microsoft Word format. If anyone is taking the class for ThM credit, please let me know this and we will discuss the nature and length of that research paper.

Official Seminary Plagiarism Policy:

Plagiarism is the use in writing of wording or ideas produced by others without crediting the author and/or source from which the material was taken. As the following statement indicates, plagiarism is a serious offense that undermines both the witness and integrity of the Christian community:

Plagiarism injures the community by inhibiting the recognition and cultivation of gifts imparted by the Spirit. Clearly unattributed use of the words and/or ideas of others fails to give appreciative recognition of their gifts. But this illegitimate appropriation of the gifts of others also blocks the recognition and cultivation of the actual gifts of the person engaged in plagiarism.

Plagiarism creates an atmosphere of falsehood in the community's discernment and cultivation of gifts, both within the Christian community and in God's larger creation. Since freedom comes only by way of truth (Jn. 8:32), such falsehood can only result in captivity, and therefore has no place in the Christian community.

On this basis, the Seminary adheres to the following general requirements for the acknowledgement of sources of academic work. These requirements apply to both print and electronic media.

1. Quotations. Any sentence or phrase that a student uses from another source must be placed in quotation marks or, in the case of longer quotations, clearly indented beyond the regular margin. Any quotation must be accompanied (either within the text or in a note) by a precise indication of the source.

2. Paraphrasing. Any material that is paraphrased or summarized must also be specifically acknowledged in a note or in the text.

3. Ideas. Specific ideas that are borrowed should be acknowledged in a note or in the text, even if the idea has been further elaborated by the student.

4. Bibliography. All the sources consulted in the preparation of an essay or report should be listed in a bibliography.

In addition to plagiarism, the following related practices are also unacceptable compromises of the truth requisite to a free community:

1. Multiple submission. Failure to obtain prior written permission of the relevant instructors to submit work which has been submitted in identical or similar form in fulfillment of any other academic requirement at any institution.

2. False citation. The deliberate attribution to, or citation of, a source from which the material in question was not, in fact, obtained.

3. Submission of work done by someone else, either with or without that person's knowledge. Neither ignorance of the regulations concerning academic violations nor personal extenuating circumstances are an adequate defense against charges of plagiarism. The Seminary's provisions for "due process" apply in cases of alleged plagiarism.

[The italicized statement above is used by permission of The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, based upon a document adapted by LTSP, with permission, from "Princeton University Rights, Rules and Responsibilities," 1990 Edition. Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey.]

Occurrences of plagiarism shall be considered 'documented' when the instructor is able to produce documentary evidence that plagiarism has occurred, and when the instructor has reason to believe that the plagiarism was motivated by a deliberate attempt to receive credit for ideas or work not the student's own. Where such plagiarism involves the theft of the academic work of another student, whether at Erskine or any other institution, it shall be designated 'documented theft of another student's work.'

The instructor involved, in consultation with the Dean, may recommend measures deemed appropriate. In cases of documented plagiarism or documented theft of another student's work, the offending student will automatically receive the following penalties:

- Failure of the course(s) in which plagiarized or stolen work is submitted
- Dismissal from the Seminary for a minimum of one semester
- Forfeiture of the right to tuition refunds during the semester(s) affected

Before such penalties are imposed, a committee of at least three faculty members must agree that they are appropriate to the case. Appeals in such cases may only be addressed, in writing, to the President of Erskine College and Theological Seminary.

Grading Policy:

Percentage of Work: the writing of the assigned original work paper 40% and related sermon or Adult Sunday School lesson 15%, reading log 10% and quality of preparation, demonstration of developing skill set and class participation 35%.

Grading Scale

100-95	A	85-84	C+	71-70	D-
94-93	A-	83-80	C	69-0	F
92-91	B+	79-78	C-		
90-88	B	77-76	D+		

87-86	B-	75-72	D	
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Chapel Attendance Policy

All morning and afternoon on-campus classes (except for Friday and Saturday courses) carry a chapel attendance requirement. Consult the Catalog or registration booklet for the specifics of the chapel attendance policy. There is a per chapel fee if you attend fewer chapels than required. This requirement does not apply to Erskine College students taking this course.

Class Attendance Policy

Students must attend each class meeting. If a student must be absent they are responsible for all work due and accomplished during that class session. One class period can be missed without penalty. Any additional class period missed, unless it constitutes a genuine emergency (to be determined by the professor) threatens the student's ability to successfully pass this course. Students who miss more than one class period should consult with the professor to see whether they can pass the course.

Drop/Add/Withdrawal

Once a student has completed, signed, and submitted his/her registration to the Registrar for this class, it is a *binding contract* and billing will be based on this registration. If the student decides not to take this class, he/she must complete a "drop/add" form and secure the appropriate signatures *prior to the drop/add deadline during the second week of the semester or term*. If one wishes to withdraw from the course after the drop/add deadline, one must complete a withdrawal form, and tuition will be refunded on a pro rated basis. Failure to withdraw from the class properly will result in the student's receiving a grade of "F" for the course and full tuition charges will apply. *No exceptions will be made to this policy.*

Incompletes

The grade of "I" or incomplete is given at the discretion of the professor. A grade of "I" is normally given when a student has substantially completed the requirements for a course but has been prevented by extraordinary circumstances from completing the remainder of the course requirements. A student who wishes to request an incomplete should normally complete an incomplete form prior to the end of the semester and ask the professor to grant the request. (Under unusual circumstances, the student may communicate with the professor by phone or email rather than in person, and the professor may then agree to fill out the form at the student's request. Under exceptional circumstances, the professor may initiate the process by filling out the form on the student's behalf.) If the professor grants the request, he/she will sign the incomplete form and turn it in with his/her final grade report. An "I" in any course must be removed by March 1 for the Fall Term, April 1 for the January Term, August 1 for the Spring Term, and November 1 for the Summer Term. Only the Dean may grant extensions of

incompletes beyond the established completion date. Otherwise, these grades automatically become “F.”

All work is to be turned in on time. Any work that is turned in after the due date will be subject to at least a one grade penalty. Work that is significantly late (determined by the professor) can result in failure of the course.

Incompletes

Students should review the Seminary policy on “Incompletes” in the Seminary catalog. A grade of “Incomplete” is not a privilege of the student. It is the prerogative of the professor. It can be given as a final grade only when the student (1) has completed most of his/her course work and (2) has been providentially hindered from doing the rest of the course work. Note that there is a processing fee associated with “Incompletes,” and that “Incompletes” must be completed by the stated deadline or they automatically become an “F.” Only the Dean may approve extensions of deadlines for “Incompletes.”

Course Outline: Lectures and Assignments

Dear class, I will provide specific reading assignments in the near future with an updated version of this section of the course syllabus. In the meantime, feel free to begin reading in the textbooks and in the book of Psalms.