NEJS 10a
Biblical Hebrew Grammar and Texts
Fall Semester, 2017
T, F 12:30–1:50 PM

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Course Description
This course is a step-by-step introduction to the grammar of Biblical Hebrew with a survey of the Hebrew Bible’s major genres. Texts are read in Hebrew; the course is taught in English. The course emphasizes the grammatical and literary aspects of the texts. The course requires participation in class activities and the timely completion of regular assignments. Assessment consists of weekly quizzes, two cumulative exams (a midterm and a final), and a final translation project. Success in this 4 credit-hour course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc.).

Course Objectives
The goal of this course is to equip you with the grammatical and literary (“philological”) tools you need to engage the Hebrew Bible in its original language. In pursuit of this goal, the course has two objectives: (1) to lay a foundation grammatical knowledge and (2) to apply that knowledge to translating a variety of biblical texts. To achieve the first objective, we will be following the instructional program in A Basic Introduction to Biblical Hebrew, by Jo Ann Hackett. As we progress through Hackett’s textbook, we will focus more and more on translating biblical texts and understanding the different ‘kinds’ (genres) of texts in the Hebrew Bible.

Learning Outcomes
Your efforts this semester should lead to several specific learning outcomes. These outcomes are consonant with the tasks students are expected to perform in an advanced Hebrew Bible text course or seminar, namely,

– to (sight-)read a BH passage out loud confidently and accurately,
– to identify each word’s part of speech,
– to parse inflected words,
– to translate familiar words, expressions, and grammatical constructions from memory, and look up unfamiliar ones in dictionaries and reference grammars,
– to analyze the syntax of a sentence or verse—i.e., divide it into smaller units (clauses, phrases) and identify the subject(s), predicate(s), modifier(s), etc.,
– to translate the passage into idiomatic English and identify its genre, and
– to annotate the translation with philological observations informed by scholarly commentaries.
Prerequisite
The registrar lists HBRW 20b or its equivalent (i.e., one full year of college-level Modern Hebrew) as a prerequisite for this course. This prerequisite has been put in place to ensure that students can keep up with the course’s fast pace; however, the course itself does not presuppose any prior knowledge of Modern Hebrew. Therefore, if you are motivated to take this course, but do not meet the prerequisite, e-mail me immediately to request an exemption. Members of the NEJS faculty will then confer with your academic advisor to determine the appropriateness of your taking this course this semester.

Course Materials
Required:
- *A Basic Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*, by Jo Ann Hackett (2010)*
- *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (BHS)*—the standard scholarly edition of the Hebrew Bible
- **One** of the following single-volume Biblical Hebrew–English lexica:

Recommended:
- *Grammatical Concepts 101 for Biblical Hebrew*, 2nd edition, by Gary A. Long (2013)—this resource is especially helpful for students who are less confident in their grasp of English grammar concepts (e.g., the difference between a phrase and clause; subordination; relative pronouns; etc.).

*Available for purchase from the bookstore.

The Design of This Course: A “Flipped” Approach
In a “flipped” classroom, students teach themselves basic content before class, freeing up time in class for deeper engagement. This is the approach we will take in this course, especially as we work through Hackett’s textbook. Your responsibility, therefore, is to prepare textbook chapters prior to the date for which they are assigned on the course schedule. We will typically cover one or two chapters per session.

*How to Prepare a Textbook Chapter for Class:*
To prepare a chapter, read the lesson carefully, familiarize yourself with the vocabulary, and complete the exercises as assigned on the schedule. Be sure to keep track of any questions that arise from your reading, as these will guide our discussion of the material during class. Class time will typically be spent going over the reading and exercises due, previewing the next set of chapters, and, when time allows, playing games for additional practice.
Work for the Course and Grading Schema

Class Preparation and Participation (20%)
See the preceding paragraph for how to prepare for class. You will receive full credit as long as you come to class having done the readings and exercises—checked for completion at the beginning of each class—and take an active role in class discussions and activities. You may miss up to three class sessions—excluding exam days—for any reason without affecting your participation score. Each additional absence beyond three will lower your final grade by one percentage point. See the attendance policy, below, for more details.

Regular Grammar/Vocab Quizzes (20%)
These are 5–10-minute quizzes focusing on the grammar and vocabulary learned since the previous quiz, though all material from the beginning of the semester is fair game (since grammar is inherently cumulative!). These quizzes are given at the beginning of class, so be sure to arrive on time on quiz days. I will drop your two lowest quiz scores.

Midterm (20%)
The midterm is scheduled to take place during class on Friday, October 13, and it will tentatively cover chs. 1–18.

Final Exam (30%)
The final exam is scheduled for Monday, December 18, 1:30–4:30 (subject to change by the registrar). I will provide more details about the exam closer to the end of the semester.

Translation Adventure (10%)
We will have one translation adventure this semester that you are responsible for completing, submitting, and presenting to your classmates. The Translation Adventure can be a passage you select from the Hebrew Bible, which you carefully translate and annotate, looking not only at the grammar and vocabulary of the passage, but also historical translations (making informed decisions on when to agree or disagree with past, often famous, translators). The Translation Adventure can also be a focused study of a single word, usually a very common word in the Hebrew Bible (for example, “to love”), whose easy English translation has covered up many different cultural dimensions that we can only see through the Hebrew. We will talk about this in more detail in class. The translation adventure will be assigned closer to the end of the semester (we need to build our skills first!).

The Translation Adventure is due Tuesday, November 28. Upload a PDF of your assignment to LATTE by class time, and bring a hard copy to class.

Policies

Attendance
This course requires regular attendance. As stated above, you may miss up to three class sessions—excluding exam days—for any reason without affecting your participation score. Each additional absence beyond three will lower your final grade by one percentage point.

The midterm exam is scheduled for Friday, October 13, 2017. If you have a conflict with this exam date, notify me as soon as possible. I will offer a makeup midterm exam if your
conflict is excusable. An excused conflict is defined as (a) an excused absence from me, obtained within the first two weeks of the course; (b) an emergency or sudden illness. In the case of sudden illness, I expect a note from the health center or a physician. In the case of a different type of emergency, a makeup midterm exam is at my discretion.

The final exam is scheduled for Monday, December 18, 1:30–4:30. Absence from the final exam is handled by the registrar’s office.

Electronics
I ask that all electronic devices be turned off and stowed away during class. If you feel that your learning will be hampered by not having access to your laptop for note-taking or other legitimate purposes, please see me to discuss this.

Academic Integrity
“You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. Please consult Brandeis University Rights and Responsibilities for all policies and procedures related to academic integrity. Students may be required to submit work to TurnItIn.com software to verify originality. Allegations of alleged academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Director of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for academic dishonesty can include failing grades and/or suspension from the university. Citation and research assistance can be found at LTS - Library guides” (“Brandeis University Recommended Guidelines: Syllabus Checklist”).

Accommodations for Students with Documented Disabilities
“If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately” (“Brandeis University Recommended Guidelines: Syllabus Checklist”).

Class Schedule*

*Subject to change. Additional readings and assignments will be given in class and posted to LATTE.

**Week 1**
9/1 (F) Welcome!
- Introductions
- Review syllabus
- What is Biblical Hebrew?
- Preview chs. 1–5
  - Hebrew alphabet
  - consonant classes
  - vowel classes
  - two types of *dagesh*
  - syllabification
  - finding the accent
**Week 2**

9/5 (T)  
- Hackett, chs. 1–5  
  - 1–5 (all)  
  - Review readings and exercises due  
  - Preview chs. 6 and 7  
    - two types of *dagesh*  
    - syllabification  
    - finding the accent

9/8 (F)  
- Hackett, chs. 6 and 7  
  - 6: A (pick 10 words), B, C; 7 (all)  
  - Review reading and exercises due  
  - Preview chs. 8 and 9  
    - nouns: formation, gender, and number  
    - the definite article -ן (“the”)  
    - the conjunction -ו (“and”)  
    - prepositions (“to,” “with,” “toward,” etc.)  
    - prepositions with pronominal suffixes (“to me,” “with you,” etc.)  
    - the relative pronoun אֲשֶׁר (“that, which, who”)

**Week 3**

9/12 (T)  
- Quiz chs. 1–7  
- Hackett, chs. 8 and 9  
  - 8 (all); 9: A, B (odds), C  
  - Review reading and exercises due  
  - Preview chs. 10 and 11  
    - the noun in construct state (ֵם/facebook)  
    - construct chains  
    - demonstratives  
    - nouns with pronominal suffixes

9/15 (F)  
- Hackett, chs. 10 and 11  
  - 10: A1, A2 (odds), B, C; 11 (all)  
  - Review reading and exercises due  
  - Preview chs. 12–13  
    - *qal* prefix conjugation (*יִקְטֹל, יִקְטַל*)  
    - *qal* imperative (*קטל*)  
    - the particle אֵת, אֶת  
    - resumptive pronouns

**Week 4**

9/19 (T)  
- Quiz chs. 8–11  
- Hackett, chs. 12 and 13  
  - 12 (all); 13: A (odds), B, C  
  - Review reading and exercises due
- Preview chs. 14 and 15
  - *qal* jussive and cohortative
  - *qal* jussive and cohortative w/ object suffixes
  - *qal* consecutive preterite (וַיִּקְטֹל)
  - the particle נָא
  - the interrogative הֵ׳׳א (-ְא)

9/22 (F) No class—Rosh Hashanah

**Week 5**

9/26 (T)  
- **Hackett, chs. 14 and 15**
  - 14 (all); 15 (all)
  - Review reading and exercises due
  - Preview chs. 16 and 17
    - *qal* suffix conjugation (קָטַל) and the *ve-qatal* form
    - *qal* infinitive construct (קְטֹל)
    - *qal* infinitive absolute (קָטֹל)

9/29 (F)  
- **Quiz chs. 12–15**
  - **Hackett, chs. 16 and 17**
  - 16: A (odds), B, C; 17: A (odds), B, C
  - Review reading and exercises due
  - Preview ch. 18
    - *qal* active participle (קֹטֵל)
    - *qal* passive participle (קָטוּל)
    - the particle of existence יֵשׁ (“there is”)
    - the particle of non-existence אֵין (“there is not”)

**Week 6**

10/3 (T) No class—Brandeis Thursday

10/6 (F)  
- **Hackett, ch. 18**
  - 18 (all)
  - Review reading and exercises due
  - Review for midterm

**Week 7**

10/10 (T)  
- **Quiz chs. 16–18**
  - Review for midterm

10/13 (F) **Midterm** (in class; covers chs. 1–18)

**Week 8**

10/17 (T)  
- **Hackett, ch. 19**
  - 19 (all)
- Go over midterm
- Combined review of ch. 19 and preview of ch. 20
  - introduction to the derived verbal stems
  - niphal—forms and meanings
  - the numerals 1 and 2
  - the accents soph pasuk (סพวกเขา‎), atnakh (אַתְנַח), silluq (сильוּק), and zaqeph (זָקֵף)
- Review exercises due

10/20 (F)  
- Hackett, ch. 20
  - 20 (all)
- Review reading and exercises due
- Preview ch. 21
  - hiphil—forms and meanings (part 1)
  - the accent revia (רְבִיעַ)

10/24 (T)  
- Quiz chs. 19 and 20
- Hackett, ch. 21
  - 21. A (odds), B, C
- Review reading and exercises due
- Preview ch. 22
  - hiphil—forms and meanings (part 2)
  - hophal—forms and meanings
  - the numerals 3–10
  - the accent munakh (מוּנַח)

10/27 (F)  
- Hackett, ch. 22
  - 22. A (odds), B, C
- Review reading and exercises due
- Preview chs. 23 and 24
  - piel—forms and meanings
  - pual—forms and meanings
  - hitpael—forms and meanings
  - ordinal numbers (“first,” “second,” etc.)
  - the accents tipkhah (טיְפִיְחָא) and merkah (מֵירְכָא)

10/31 (T)  
- Quiz chs. 20–21
- Hackett, chs. 23 and 24
  - 23: A (odds), B (odds), C; 24: A (odds), B (parse all verbs A3, 5, 7, 9)
- Review reading and exercises due
- Preview ch. 25
verbs of III-Weak roots in qal, niphal, hiphil, and piel
verbs of III-Weak + I-Guttural roots
irregular verbs of III-Weak roots

11/3 (F)  

Hackett, ch. 25

25: A (odds), B, C
- Review reading and exercises due
- Preview ch. 26
  - two types of I-Nun roots
  - the verb לָקַח (“to take”)
  - the verb הִכָּה (“to strike,” hiphil of נכי)
  - the verb הִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת (“to bow,” hishtaphel of חוי)

11/7 (T)  

Quiz chs. 22–25

Hackett, ch. 26

26: A (odds), B, C
- Review reading and exercises due
- Preview ch. 27
  - I-Weak verbs
  - the verb לָלָה (“to go, walk”)
  - the verb יָכֹל (“to be able”)

11/10 (F)  

Hackett, ch. 27

27: A (odds), B (parse all verbs in A3 and 7), C
- Review reading and exercises due
- Introduce Translation Adventure project
- Preview ch. 28
  - verbs of II-Weak (“hollow”) roots in the qal, niphal, and hiphil
  - the locative suffix יָהּ-

11/14 (T)  

Quiz chs. 26 and 27

Hackett, ch. 28

28: A (odds), B (parse all verbs in A3 and 13), C
- Review reading and exercises due
- Preview ch. 29
  - polel, polal, and hitpolel: forms and meanings
  - the particle הַנִּנֶּה (“behold”)
  - forms of oaths

11/17 (F)  

Hackett, ch. 29
✓ 29: A (odds)
  ▪ Review reading and exercises due
  ▪ Preview ch. 30
    – verbs of geminated roots in the qal, niphal, hiphil
    – numerals higher than 10

11/21 (T) I may need to cancel class this day to attend a professional conference. I will let you know closer to the date.

11/24 (F) No class—Thanksgiving Break

11/28 (T) *Translation Adventure due* (submit a hard copy in class and upload a PDF version to LATTE by class time)
  Hackett, ch. 30
  ✓ 30: A, B (odds)
  ▪ Review reading and exercises due

12/1 (F) Translation Adventure presentations

12/5 (T) Translation Adventure presentations

12/8 (F) Review for final exam

| Final Exam: Monday, December 18, 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm |