

I. Course Rationale

About seventy-five percent of the Bible is written in Hebrew. Reading the Bible in its original languages is an invaluable skill yielding daily returns for a lifetime of ministry.

The Bible may be likened to a treasure house of God's introduction (of God's own Self) and of God's instruction in faithful and righteous living. Many of the treasures inside reveal their deepest value and most shimmering beauty only in the languages they originally were cast in. On the "negative" side, many misunderstandings of the Bible's teachings--misunderstandings both comical and grave--can be corrected only on the basis of the text in its original language(s).

The minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is responsible to convey the message of the Bible to many persons in many settings over a lifetime of ministry. The minister requires a fountain of living waters, not a cistern into which s/he can pour only that which s/he has carried from someone else's spring. The question is not, "Can I afford the time and effort required to learn to function in biblical Hebrew?" but, rather, "Can I afford *not* to invest for the knowledge, skills, and understanding that will yield so rich a return for me, and for all those I minister to, for the life of my ministry?"

II. Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Recite and write from memory the Hebrew alphabet and vowel chart.
2. Read any verse in the Hebrew Bible.
3. Reproduce and understand the functions of the Hebrew noun, adjective, and pronoun systems, and the Qal stem of the verb system.
4. Identify (parse) strong verbs in the remaining Hebrew stems.
5. Translate, in addition, about 200 of the most common words in biblical Hebrew.
6. Use the basic lexical and grammatical tools available to the Hebrew student.
7. Translate, with helps, most Hebrew prose texts, and some poetic texts.

III. Required Texts

1. Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*.
2. United Bible Societies. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*.
3. Van Pelt, Miles V. and Gary D. Pratico. *The Vocabulary Guide to Biblical Hebrew*.
4. Weingreen, J. *A Practical Grammar for Classical Hebrew*.

IV. Course Schedule

Pre-Course-Meeting Assignments:

1. Memorize the Hebrew alphabet, so as to write and recite it perfectly, without helps.
2. Memorize the biblical Hebrew vowel chart, so as to write it perfectly, without helps.
3. Memorize the first fifty words in Van Pelt and Pratico's list, pp. 2-4.

Modular Daily Schedule:

August 31 - Course Introduction; Noun and adjective declension; Independent personal (subject) pronoun declension.

Sept. 1 - Quiz; review; vocabulary; introduction to prepositions; dependent (object) pronoun declension.

2 - Quiz; review; vocabulary; introduction to lexicon.

3 - Quiz; review; vocabulary; Qal stem perfect verb paradigm.

Sept. 6 - Quiz; review; vocabulary; Qal stem imperfect verb paradigm.

7 - Quiz; review; vocabulary; remaining Qal stem verb features.

8 - Quiz; review; vocabulary; introduction to Hebrew verb system.

9 - Quiz; review; vocabulary; introduction to weak verbs.

10 - Final examination, Part 1; discussion of post-course-meeting assignments and procedures.

Post-Course-Meeting Assignments:

Weekly translation assignments, schedule to be distributed and discussed 09/10/04.