



OT 3XA3 - Biblical Aramaic

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Professor of record: Mark J. Boda

Fall Semester 2019

Wednesdays, 11:00am-12:50pm

Welcome

Welcome to Introduction to Biblical Aramaic class. This semester we will begin a journey into an ancient language that has enduring significance because of the writings that have survived to this day. These are preserved in a multitude of ancient manuscripts. The focus of this course is on ancient written Biblical Aramaic, although students will gain some exposure to earlier and later forms of ancient Aramaic.

Description

An introduction to the grammar, syntax and vocabulary of the Aramaic language of the Old Testament. Class sessions, tests and examination.

Prerequisite: Introductory Hebrew

Purpose

- **Knowing: To understand the basic history, morphology (formation of letters, syllables, and words) and syntax (formation of thought groups: phrases, clauses, sentences) of biblical Aramaic and to acquire a basic reading vocabulary.**
- **Being: To gain an appreciation for Biblical Aramaic aesthetically and for the helpfulness of knowing Aramaic for understanding the Old Testament.**
- **Doing: To demonstrate proficiency in reading Biblical Aramaic and in using the basic tools (grammars, lexicons) for studying Biblical Aramaic.**

Textbooks

Required Textbook

Greenspahn, Frederick E. *An Introduction to Aramaic* (2nd edition). Resources for Biblical Study. Atlanta: SBL, 2003.

This is the main guide for the course and contains exercises and lists of vocabulary to be learned.

Other Resources:

Bartelt, Andrew and Steinmann, Andrew E. *Fundamental Biblical Aramaic*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Academic Press, 2004.

Bartelt, Andrew and Steinmann, Andrew E. *Workbook and Supplementary Exercises for Fundamental Biblical Hebrew and Fundamental Biblical Aramaic*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Academic Press, 2006.

Bauer, Hans and Pontus Leander. *Grammatik des Biblisch-Aramäischen*. Hildesheim/New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1981.

Johns, Alger F. *A Short Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*. Revised edition. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1972

Jumper, James N. *A Short Grammar of Biblical Aramaic: An Annotated Answer Key*. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2003.

Holladay, W. L. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

Rosenthal, Franz. *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1961.

Stevenson, William B. *Grammar of Palestinian Jewish Aramaic*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2000.

Van Pelt, Miles V. *Basics of Biblical Aramaic: Complete Grammar, Lexicon, and Annotated Text*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.

Required Lexicon (choose one)

Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Corrected ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1952

Holladay, William L. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972.

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

Koehler-Baumgartner, eds. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament: vol.5. The New Koehler-Baumgartner in English*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994-99.

These are dictionaries of all the Hebrew and Aramaic words in the Hebrew Bible along with their definitions.

Other Resources:

Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project: <http://cal1.cn.huc.edu/>
Marcus Jastrow, A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature (reprinted, New York: Judaica Press, 1980). It is available online:

<http://www.tyndalearchive.com/tabs/jastrow/>.

Michael Sokoloff, A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic (2d ed.; Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 2002).

Gesenius' Lexicon:

<http://www.tyndalearchive.com/TABS/Gesenius/index.htm>.

Required Bible

Kittel, R. ed. Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia. Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt 1969-.

This is the critical edition of the Hebrew Bible based on the medieval Massoretic manuscript Codex Leningradis with critical notations on all other ancient witnesses to the Hebrew text (including Massoretic, Dead Sea Scrolls, Septuagint, Old Latin, Vulgate, Syriac, Targums, etc.).

Other Resources:

Marcus, David. Biblia Hebraica Quinta: Fascile 20: Ezra and Nehemiah. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006.

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

Learning Experiences

Sep	Lessons
11	Introduction, Chapters 1-5*
18	Chapters 6-8
25	Chapters 9-12
Oct	
2	Chapters 13-15
9	Midterm Exam
16	Mid-Semester Break
23	Chapters 16-18
30	Chapters 19-21
Nov	
6	Chapters 22-24
13	Chapters 25-27
20	Chapters 28-29
27	Chapters 30-32
Apr	
4	Syriac Script
11	Final Exam

Schedule

*Date indicates the material introduced in class, exercises will be worked on in the week following to be taken up in the following class along with a vocabulary test on the material studied. Example: On September 25th there will be a vocabulary test on chapters 9-12 and the workbook material including textual readings for chapters 9-12 will be taken up. Then the material for chapters 13-15 will be previewed.

During the week of Sept 18th there will be a vocabulary test on all of chapters 1-8.

Evaluation

Exercises (Textbook)

Greenspahn's textbook provides opportunities for practicing what is learned in the lessons and class. Students will hand in these exercises at 4 intervals during the course to ensure they are keeping up.

Quizzes (Vocabulary)

Each week at the beginning of class there will be a vocabulary quiz on Aramaic vocabulary covered up to that point in the course.

Midterm Exam (Grammar/Syntax)

At the mid point in the semester there will be an exam covering all material to that point. You will be asked to translate passages we have covered in class and discuss grammatical features of these texts in light of our discussions in class and the grammar.

Final Exam (Grammar/Syntax)

There will be a second exam in this course during final exam week covering all material from the mid-term until the end of the semester. As with the mid term, you will be asked to translate passages we have covered in class and discuss grammatical features of these texts in light of our discussions in class and the grammar.

Exercises (Textbook): 20%

Quizzes (Vocabulary): 20%

Midterm Exam (Grammar/Syntax): 30%

Final Exam (Grammar/Syntax): 30%

Bibliography:

Additional Text Resources

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- Dalman, Gustaf, ed. Aramäische Dialektproben. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1896.**
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A., and Daniel J. Harrington. A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts . Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978.**
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- Sperber, Alexander. The Bible in Aramaic: based on old manuscripts and printed texts. Leiden New York: E.J. Brill, 1992.**
- Strack, Hermann L. Grammatik des biblisch-aramäischen. 6th ed.; München: C. H. Beck, 1921.**

Introduction

- Beyer, Klaus and John F. Healey. The Aramaic Language: Its Distribution and Subdivisions. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1986.**
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. "The Phases of the Aramaic Language," in A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays. SBLMS 25. Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979, 57-84.**
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- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays. No. 25, SBLMS, Scholars Press, 1979,**
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A., S. J., and Stephen A. Kaufman. 1992. An Aramaic Bibliography, Part I, Old, Official, and Biblical Aramaic. Publications of The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project. The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore and London.**
- Greenfield, Jonas C., "Aramaic and its Dialects," in Jewish Languages: Themes and Variations . Edited by Herbert H. Paper. Cambridge, Mass.: Association for Jewish Studies, 1978, 29-43.**
- Greenspahn, Frederick E. "Aramaic," in Beyond Babel: A Handbook for Biblical Hebrew and Related Languages. Edited by John Kaltner and Steven L. McKenzie. Resources for Biblical Study. Atlanta/Leiden: Society of Biblical Literature/Brill, 2002, 93-108.**
- Hoberman, Robert D. "Aramaic," in International Encyclopedia of Linguistics (2nd Edition). Edited by William Frawley. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, 126-131**
- Hoftijzer, J. and Jongeling, K. Dictionary of West Semitic Inscriptions. 2 vols., E. J. Brill, 1994.**

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- Marcus, David. *A Manual of Babylonian Jewish Aramaic*. Washington: University Press of America, 1981.
- Segert, Stanislav. *Altaramäische Grammatik mit Bibliographie, Chrestomathie und Glossar*. Leipzig: VEB Verlag Enzyklopädie, 1975.

Tanak Aramaic:

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- Beaulieu, Paul-Alain, "The Babylonian Background of the Motif of the Fiery Furnace in Daniel 3," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 128 (2009): 273-90.
- Buth, Randall J. "Word Order in the Aramaic Narratives of Daniel from the Perspectives of Functional Grammar and Discourse Analysis." *Occasional Papers in Translation and Textlinguistics* 1 (1987): 3-12.
- Coxon, Peter W. "The Syntax of the Aramaic of Daniel: A Dialectal Study." *HUCA* 48 (1977): 107-22.
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- Jongeling, K., H. L. Murre-van den Berg, Lucas van Rompay, and J. Hoftijzer. *Studies in Hebrew and Aramaic syntax: presented to Professor J. Hoftijzer on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday*. *Studies in Semitic languages and linguistics*. 17. Leiden ; New York: Brill, 1991.

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Non-Tanak Imperial Aramaic

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Second Temple Jewish Aramaic

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Targums and Rabbinic Aramaic

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Please Note: This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.