



**MCMASTER DIVINITY COLLEGE  
COURSE SYLLABUS  
SPRING 2023**

**OT 1B03–GUIDE TO BIBLICAL LANGUAGES: HEBREW 1**

**1. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:**

**Name:** Steve Choi, MDiv, ThM

**Email:** [choic32@mcmaster.ca](mailto:choic32@mcmaster.ca)

**Office Hours:** Via Zoom by appointment

**2. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This class (Hebrew 1) and the subsequent one (Hebrew 2) are foundational courses to equip students to study the Old Testament (OT) in Hebrew. At the end of these two classes, the students will recognize basic Hebrew vocabulary and understand the basic grammatical aspects of biblical Hebrew. This foundation facilitates the students to pursue Hebrew Exegesis courses to further develop their ability to exegete OT in Hebrew.

Learning a new language is challenging. Learning Hebrew in a modern environment is even more challenging because the sound and writing differ from most modern languages we grew up with. Learning Hebrew in a compressed timeframe online further compounds this challenge. To alleviate these challenges, the course has been tailor-made to orient students' energy and effort toward essential components of Biblical Hebrew and language theory.

**3. Course Delivery Mode**

This seven weeks biblical language course will be delivered completely online asynchronously through [Avenue to Learn](#) (A2L). All the required learning activities will become available no later than the beginning of the corresponding week (Monday morning) in A2L. In a typical week, a student should focus on at least two chapters from *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar* (BBH).

For example, the course schedule at the end of this syllabus and A2L shows that the students are responsible for BBH 3–4 in week 2 (May 8–15). BBH 3–4 means Chapters 3 and 4 from *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar* (BBH). In this example (week 2), the student should

1. **start** memorizing the vocabulary words from the vocabulary section in Chapters 3 and 4 on **Monday morning, if not earlier**. The student should spend at least 30–60 mins **every day** memorizing them.
2. **complete** reading the respective chapters in BBH thoroughly by **Tuesday evening**.
3. **watch** the lecture video by **Wednesday evening**.
4. **complete** the workbook exercises corresponding to the respective chapters. Scan the pages from the workbook exercises into one single pdf and submit the scanned pdf (one pdf) on the

respective section under Assignments at A2L by **Friday evening** (ideally, start immediately after reading the chapters).

5. **complete** the assigned quizzes or mid-term before their due dates (typically **Saturday evening**) specified according to A2L.




Although online asynchronous class means that there will be no live class sessions, the instructor recommends meeting together as a class to offer pastoral rapport, review workbook exercises, and answer questions. Participation is voluntary. We will determine a time through a survey around one week before the class starts.

Since this is an online course, the question arises about accountability on quizzes and exams. For all quizzes and mid-term, you are on your honor to not use any notes or tools as you take them. However, the final exams must be proctored. You need to arrange for someone to proctor your exams. It cannot be a relative or classmate. It must be a person in a position of responsibility. For example, you can ask someone with an official capacity at your church, such as a church administrative assistant or your small group leader. Your choice needs the instructor's approval. Prior to the exam date, the instructor will email the exam to the proctor, who needs to print out the exam from a PDF file, supervise you taking the exam, then scan it back to the instructor.

Students are also encouraged to meet with the instructors (by appointment, either in person or on Zoom) to discuss any questions related to the class and/or the assignments. Students should expect to commit at least 12 hours per week to the course.

#### 4. Learning Outcomes

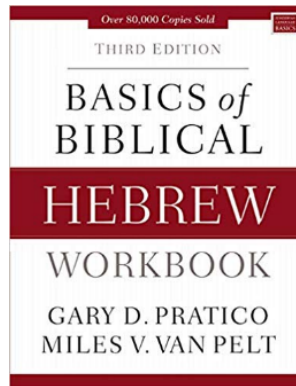
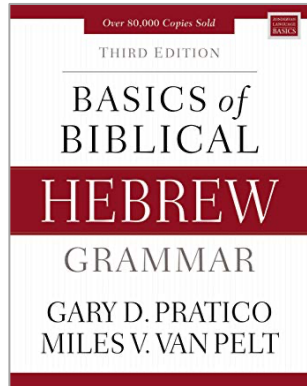


- a.  Knowing
  - To understand how language makes meaning
  - To understand the functions of language such as the interpersonal, experiential, and textual
  - To recognize and understand key biblical vocabulary in Hebrew
  - To begin to learn the grammatical forms/paradigms in Hebrew
- b.  Being
  - “To present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” (2 Tim 2:15)
  - To be a mature interpreter of Scripture as taught by the Spirit (1 Cor 2:6–16)
  - To allow the Scripture to motivate, form, and transform our faith, worship, and Christian way of life
- c.  Doing

- To describe how choices in language affect the meaning of the biblical text
- To describe the functions of the basic grammatical forms in Hebrew and use them in interpretation
- To begin to read and translate Hebrew texts
- To interpret the biblical text meaningfully without committing common mistakes

## 5. Course Resource Requirements

### Texts and Resources



#### 1. Grammar (required)

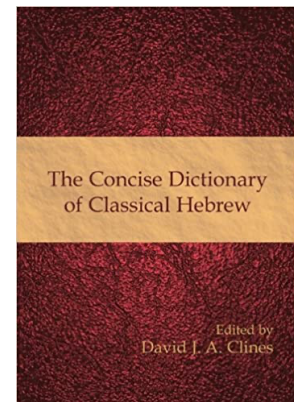
Pratico, Gary D., and Miles Van Pelt. *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019. ISBN: 978-0310533498

#### 2. Workbook (required)

Pratico, Gary D., and Miles Van Pelt. *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Workbook*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019. ISBN: 978-0310533559

#### 3. Lexicon (Optional)

*The Concise Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Edited by David J. A. Clines et al. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2009. ISBN: 978-1906055790



### SUGGESTED RESOURCES

**This is a helpful resource for Hebrew students unfamiliar with English grammar:**

Van Pelt, Miles V. *English Grammar to Ace Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010.

**This is an excellent resource for doing appropriate word studies:**

Baxter, Benjamin J. *"In the Original Text It Says": Word-Study Fallacies and How to Avoid Them.* Critical Christian Issues. Gonzalez, FL: Energion, 2012.

**Vocabulary Resources (keyed to the text):**

Pratico, Gary D., and Miles Van Pelt. *Old Testament Hebrew Vocabulary Cards.* ISBN: 978-0310534181.

Van Pelt, Miles. *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary Audio.* Audible Audiobook. ASIN: B07LCSPFNT.

**Online Resources:**

**Course Website:** <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/> Log in with your MAC ID.

**Animated Hebrew Jonah** ([http://www.animatedhebrew.com/jonah/jonah\\_01.html](http://www.animatedhebrew.com/jonah/jonah_01.html)) This free site is very helpful in learning to pronounce Hebrew.

## 6. Course Requirements and Grading

### 6.1. Overview

Workbook Exercises (Each chapter is worth 2%)	30%
Vocabulary Quizzes (Each chapter is worth 2%)	30%
Midterm Exam	10%
Final Exam	30%
Total Grade	100%

### 6.2. Course Requirements

The students **must** submit all the assignments to the appropriate Assignment Box on Avenue to Learn (A2L) in **PDF format only**.

**Workbook Exercises** Refer to A2L for due dates, more detailed instructions, and the rubric.

Workbook exercises form an essential component of your learning experience because you learn Hebrew by doing and correcting them diligently. Please read the rubric embedded in the assignments on A2L thoroughly. Below is a brief description of the two main evaluation criteria for the workbook exercises.

1. Completeness - Students must complete at least **ALL** the **ODD** number questions in their workbook exercises according to the assignment rubric.
2. Self-Correction - After completing the exercises, students must check their answers and correct them using a **DIFFERENT COLOR** pen for each answer of the **ODD number** questions according to the assignment rubric.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION for Vocabulary Quizzes, Mid-Term, and Final Exam**

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense that may take any number of forms, including “copying or using unauthorized aids in tests, examinations,” as stated in the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty at <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one’s academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>.

In the context of Hebrew quizzes, mid-term, and final exam, all the answers must be of your own. Before taking the quizzes, mid-term, and final exam, you must put away your textbook, workbook, study materials, and anything related to Hebrew either inside a drawer or another room. Ideally, you should have a clean desk with only the exam paper (final exam) or your computer (for quizzes and mid-term). You may use blank paper and a pen/pencil. Since all quizzes and mid-term are CLOSED BOOK and COMPLETELY ONLINE, you should also have a “clean” computer. This means closing all applications and browsing sessions on your computer EXCEPT the quiz or mid-term you are taking.

**Vocabulary Quizzes** Refer to A2L for due dates, more detailed instructions, and the rubric.

You will be responsible for learning roughly 250 common words in Hebrew. You will be required to give an English gloss for each. The vocabulary will be taken from the respective chapters of BBH. Since this is a summer class, the students will only be responsible for the vocabulary of the chapters covered in that specific week. For example, in week 2, the students will only be responsible for vocabulary from Chapters 3 and 4.

**Midterm Exam** Refer to the Course Schedule (next page) for the Due Date

The mid-term assesses all the materials from BBH 1–8 in the textbook, workbook, and video lectures. Although the mid-term will not directly test your vocabulary, you are expected to know all the vocabulary words from BBH 1–8. Those outside BBH 1–8 will be provided.

**Final Exam** Refer to the Course Schedule (next page) for the Due Date

The final exam assesses all the materials from BBH 1–16 in the textbook, workbook, and video lectures. Like the mid-term, the final exam will also not directly test your vocabulary. However, you are expected to know all the vocabulary words from BBH 1–16. Those outside BBH 1–16 will be provided. A review in preparation for the final exam will be available around one week before the exam.

**Policy for Late Submissions of Workbook Exercises, Quizzes, Mid-term, and Final Exam:**

Life often has unexpected twists and turns impacting our studies. Please reach out to the instructor if you have unforeseeable circumstances such as accident, illness, and crisis, which may lead to late submissions. Unless there is a valid reason, 3% of the marks will be deducted per day for late submissions.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Week	Date	Hebrew Lessons	Workbook	Quiz / Exam	Language Theory
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1	May 1–7	BBH 1–2	<b>BBH 1–2</b> May 5	<b>Quiz 1 - Aleph-bet, Vowel, and BBH 2 Vocab</b> May 6	Functions of Language
2	May 8–14	BBH 3–4	<b>BBH 3–4</b> May 12	<b>Quiz 2 – BBH 3–4 Vocab</b> May 13	
3	May 15–21	BBH 5–6	<b>BBH 5–6</b> May 19	<b>Quiz 3 – BBH 5–6 Vocab</b> May 20	
4	May 22–28	BBH 7–8	<b>BBH 7–8</b> May 26	<b>Midterm Exam BBH 1–8</b> Due by May 27 23:59	
5	May 29–June 4	BBH 9–10	<b>BBH 9–10</b> June 2	<b>Quiz 4 – BBH 7–10 Vocab</b> June 3	Words and Theology
6	June 5–11	BBH 12–14	<b>BBH 12–14</b> June 9	<b>Quiz 5 – BBH 12–14 Vocab</b> June 10	
7	June 12–18	BBH 15–16	<b>BBH15–16</b> June 16	<b>Quiz 6 – BBH 15–16 Vocab</b> June 17	
Final	June 19–24	<b>Final Exam - Due by June 24 23:59</b>			

### ***Academic Honesty***

Academic dishonesty is not qualitatively different from other types of dishonesty. It consists of misrepresenting the ownership of written work by deception or by other fraudulent means. In an academic setting this may include any number of forms such as: copying or using unauthorized aids in tests, examinations; plagiarism, i.e., submitting work that is not one’s own (regardless of the means of its production) but passing it off as if it is; submitting work for credit in a course for which credit is being or has already been given, unless the previously submitted work was presented as such to the instructor of the second course and has been deemed acceptable for credit by the instructor of that course; aiding and abetting another student’s dishonesty; giving false information for the purposes of gaining admission or credit; giving false information for the purposes of obtaining deferred examinations or extension of deadlines; forging or falsifying McMaster University or McMaster Divinity College documents.

### ***AODA***

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the content of this course is intended to be accessible to all students who are enrolled in the course, including those with disabilities. If a student requires accommodation to participate fully in this course, that student is to contact SAS at McMaster University, who will then work directly with the McMaster Divinity College Registrar to negotiate reasonably appropriate accommodation for the student. The MDC Registrar will communicate with faculty regarding necessary accommodations. Please note that an accommodation is not retroactive and must be requested in advance to allow sufficient time for implementation.

### ***Gender Inclusive Language***

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as, for example, the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), NIV (2011), and the CEB (2011).

***Bookstore***

All required textbooks for this class are available from the Hurlburt Family Bookstore located beside the entrance to the Nathaniel H. Parker Memorial Chapel of McMaster Divinity College. To purchase in advance, you may contact the bookstore manager, Bernice Quek, by phone at 416.620.2934 or 416.668.3434 (mobile); or by email at [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). The Hurlburt Family Bookstore also carries other books and merchandise and is open throughout the academic year during posted hours.

**Disclaimer:** 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.