



15800 Calvary Rd
Kansas City, MO 64147

Ph.D. Syllabus

Course: BT703 Exegesis in the Hebrew Old Testament (blended)
Credit: 3 Semester Hours
Semester: Fall 2020 (Cycle 3)
Time: 6:00–8:00 P.M. Mondays and Wednesdays (October 19–December 11)
Location: Calvary University, CABRE 101 and the online classroom*
Instructor: Joel T. Williamson, Jr., Th.M., Ph. D. pending
Office: Madison Hall 1218; Ext. 1347
Home Phone: 816-331-6245
E-mail: joel.williamson@calvary.edu

I. DESCRIPTION

Advanced application of close reading of biblical Hebrew texts, which comprises an in-depth treatment of historical and comparative phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicography, and discourse and literary approaches to biblical Hebrew texts of different genres, with a view to analyzing the Old Testament within its geographical, historical, canonical, cultural, religious and theological contexts. In addition, students will move towards fluency in vocalization and translation of all genres.

* This is a blended class, meaning that both campus and online students take this class together. Campus students attend the classes in person, online students attend the classes via the online classroom. All interaction and assignments for campus and online students are done in the online classroom.

II. OBJECTIVES. The goal of this course is to instill competence—your ability to read and exegete an entire book of the Old Testament. To reach this goal, you must demonstrate the following skills:

- A. *Lexical Skill*** (PLO: 1; Assignments: Quizzes, Reading). You will become better able to identify key terms of a text and discern the specific sense they have in the context by doing the following:
1. Defining the 125 of the words from the book of Ruth that occur 100–1000 times in the Hebrew Bible.
 2. Using contextual clues to “guess” the general meaning of unfamiliar terms.
 3. Using the lexicon to discover the specific sense of unfamiliar terms.
 4. Performing an in-depth word study of a key Hebrew term.
- B. *Analytic Skill*** (PLO’s: 1, 3; Assignments: Reading, Passage Analysis, Personal Projects). You will become better able to recognize the meaningful subdivisions in a text and identify their relation to each other:
1. Identify the syntactic function of each constituent of Hebrew clauses.
 2. Specify the notional/semantic role of each unit within propositions.
 3. Identify the function of propositions and their relation to each other within texts.
- C. *Synthetic/Survey Skill*** (PLO’s: 1, 2, 3; Assignments: Reading, Passage Analysis, Personal Projects). You will become better able to identify and validate the core idea and purpose of a text:
1. Overview the Hebrew text *before* exegeting them. (This includes sight reading it without relying on a lexicon or grammar).
 2. Classify Hebrew texts according to their discourse type.

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3. Classify Hebrew texts according to their literary genre.
 4. Identify the core concept and purpose of Hebrew texts.
 5. Validate all interpretive conclusions using factors in the text and context.
- D. *Inferential Skill.*** (PLO's: 1, 2, 3; Assignments: Reading, Passage Analysis, Personal Projects). You will become better able to relate the teaching of a text to the broader context of faith and practice:
1. Extrapolate valid theological principles from Hebrew texts.
 2. Propose practical and textually defensible modern applications of Hebrew texts.

III. TEXTBOOKS

- A. *Holy Bible.*** The Bible is a required textbook in every course at Calvary University. To facilitate academic level study, students are required to use for assignments and research an English translation or version of the Bible based on formal equivalence (meaning that the translation is generally word-for-word from the original languages), including any of the following: New American Standard (NASB, English Standard Version (ESV), New King James (NKJV), or King James (KJV). Other translations and versions based on dynamic equivalence (paraphrases, and thought-for-thought translations like NLT and NIV) may be used as supplemental sources. Please ask me if you have questions about a particular translation or version.
- B. *Other Textbooks.*** The prices are those recommended by the publisher. You can often get a better price online.
1. Holmstedt, Robert D. *Ruth: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2010. [ISBN: 978-1932792911, \$29.95 (Kindle: \$28.45)]
 2. Stuart, Douglas. *Old Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. 4th ed. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2009. [ISBN: 978-0664233440, \$27.00 (Kindle, \$9.99)]

IV. ASSIGNMENTS. It is my conviction that most of the learning and the best learning that you will receive from this class will come through the assignments you do on your own. Although the assignments will be used to calculate your course grade, their primary is to help you develop the ability to extract insight from the Hebrew Bible.

- A. *Assignment Types.*** Be sure to thoroughly proofread all written assignments. In addition to content, they will be evaluated for clarity, accuracy, adequacy, and mechanics (word choice, grammar, and spelling).
1. *Vocabulary Quizzes* (325 points). Each week, you will be assigned two twenty-five-word vocabulary quizzes in Canvas—one due at each class session for that week. The first will have only “new” words. The next ten quizzes will consist of 10 new words and 15 review words. The last two quizzes will have only review words. The vocabulary list showing the new words for each quiz is found on the Canvas home page for this course.
 2. *Reading* (150 points). Each class session will begin by reading and analyzing a portion of the Hebrew text of Ruth. You will then prepare with a brief written response, whose nature will vary from reading to reading. We will read through the book as quickly and as often as possible—until the Hebrew text is so familiar that you can read and analyze it without external aids. This will greatly enhance our study of both the book and the Hebrew language.
 3. *Passage Analysis* (300 points) Over the course of the semester, you will be assigned thoroughly analyze two lengthy passages from the book of Ruth. You will have three weeks

to complete each. Besides producing a finished English translation, you will analyze three aspects of each passage: its syntax, its literary form, and its discourse structure.

- a. Syntactic Analysis. In syntactic analysis, you treat the text as a series of isolated sentences in order to identify what each word, phrase, and clause contributes to its sentence.
 - b. Literary Analysis. In literary analysis, you focus on the text as a whole. You approach it as an example of a specific literary genre, which has its own associated themes, structures, and purposes. In this sort of analysis, you will identify the basic genre of the text and show how the author uses both the conventions of that genre and his own, creative contributions to indicate his intended purpose.
 - c. Discourse Analysis. In discourse analysis, you approach the text as a unit of communication in order to specify how the author marshals the elements of language to communicate his intended message and accomplish his intended purpose.
4. *Personal Projects* (225 points). During the course, you will prepare three personal projects: a personal translation of the book of Ruth, a Hebrew word study, and your original translation of a passage of your choice:
- a. Personal Translation of the book of Ruth (75 points). In the last class session of Week 7, you will submit your personal translation of the complete book of Ruth. This translation should be in smooth and comfortable English, but still reflect the insights you gained from your exegesis of the book.
 - b. Word Study. (75 points) On Tuesday of Week 4, you will submit your personal analysis of the meaning of an assigned Hebrew word. Each student will have a different word to study, so that you may share your results with the rest of the class.
 - c. Annotated Translation of Your Choice (75 points). In the last class session of the course, you will submit your own annotated translation of a Hebrew text that you chose (with the approval of the professor). Each student will translate a different text, so that you may share your results with the rest of the class.
5. *Textbook Reading* (-100 points). You will use the two textbooks, *Hebrew Syntax* and *Cracking Old Testament Codes*, as reference tools when completing both blind reading assignments in class and passage analyses out of class. To gain familiarity with them, you are required to read each of these books through. You gain no points by completing this assignment, but you will lose five points for each book you do not complete. Of course, the earlier you complete these readings, the more useful you will find the books. The deadline, however, is the last class session. No late reading is acceptable.

B. Specific Assignments.

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| 1. <i>Week 1a (First Class Session)</i> | | (10 points) |
| a. Reading #1 | (10 points) | |
| 2. <i>Week 1b (Second Class Session)</i> | | (10 points) |
| a. Reading #2 | (10 points) | |
| 3. <i>Week 2a (First Class Session)</i> | | (35 points) |
| a. Reading #3 | (10 points) | |
| b. Vocabulary Quiz #1 | (25 points) | |

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| 4. | <i>Week 2b (Second Class Session)</i> | (35 points) |
| | a. Reading #4 | (10 points) |
| | b. Vocabulary Quiz #2 | (25 points) |
| 5. | <i>Week 3a (First Class Session)</i> | (35 points) |
| | a. Reading #5 | (10 points) |
| | b. Vocabulary Quiz #3 | (25 points) |
| 6. | <i>Week 3b (Second Class Session)</i> | (35 points) |
| | a. Reading #6 | (10 points) |
| | b. Vocabulary Quiz #4 | (25 points) |
| | c. Choice of passage to translate | (0 points) |
| 7. | <i>Week 4a (First Class Session)</i> | (110 points) |
| | a. Reading #7 | (10 points) |
| | b. Vocabulary Quiz #5 | (25 points) |
| | c. Word Study | (75 points) |
| 8. | <i>Week 4b (Second Class Session)</i> | (185 points) |
| | a. Reading #8 | (10 points) |
| | b. Analysis #1 | (150 points) |
| | c. Vocabulary Quiz #6 | (25 points) |
| 9. | <i>Week 5a (First Class Session)</i> | (35 points) |
| | a. Reading #9 | (10 points) |
| | b. Vocabulary Quiz #7 | (25 points) |
| 10. | <i>Week 5b (Second Class Session)</i> | (35 points) |
| | a. Reading #10 | (10 points) |
| | b. Vocabulary Quiz #8 | (25 points) |
| 11. | <i>Week 6a (First Class Session)</i> | (35 points) |
| | a. Reading #11 | (10 points) |
| | b. Vocabulary Quiz #9 | (25 points) |
| 12. | <i>Week 6b (Second Class Session)</i> | (35 points) |
| | a. Reading #12 | (10 points) |
| | b. Vocabulary Quiz #10 | (25 points) |
| 13. | <i>Week 7a (First Class Session)</i> | (35 points) |
| | a. Reading #13 | (10 points) |
| | b. Vocabulary Quiz #11 | (25 points) |
| 14. | <i>Week 7b (Second Class Session)</i> | (260 points) |
| | a. Reading #14 | (10 points) |
| | b. Analysis #2 | (150 points) |
| | c. Translation of Ruth | (75 points) |
| | d. Vocabulary Quiz #12 | (25 points) |
| 15. | <i>Week 8a (First Class Session)</i> | (35 points) |
| | a. Reading #15 | (10 points) |
| | b. Vocabulary Quiz #13 | (25 points) |
| 16. | <i>Week 8b (Second Class Session)</i> | (75 points) |
| | a. Annotated Translation | (75 points) |

V. METHODS

A. Teaching

1. *Lecture*. Because this course emphasizes student participation, the professor will use lecture as little as possible. Nevertheless, you will have to put up with some lectures (including rants that sound a lot like preaching).
2. *Practical Exercise*. In this course, you do most of the work, and the professor grades it. As shown elsewhere in this syllabus, every class session will consider two Hebrew texts: a text you have worked on before class and one you have not. In addition to translating the texts, you will perform various kinds of practical exercises in reference to them.
3. *Reading*. Ultimately, the only way to learn a language is to use it. Therefore, a portion of almost every class will be devoted to sight reading of simple passages from the Hebrew Old Testament, some of which you may then have as homework.

B. Grading

1. Vocabulary Quizzes 325 points
 2. Readings 150 points
 3. Passage Analysis. 300 points
 4. Personal Projects. 225 points
- Total: 1000 points
- (Textbook Reading, –100 points)

C. Calculating Final Grade

A	960–1000	C+	840–859
A-	940–959	C	800–839
B+	920–939	C-	780–799
B	880–919	F	0–779
B-	860–879		

D. Academic Issues and Support

1. *Plagiarism*. Plagiarism is defined as copying any part of a book or paper without identifying the author. This also includes taking another person’s ideas and presenting them as your own.
2. *Style*. All class papers must follow the Turabian style according to *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th edition and the Calvary Style Guide, 2019 update.
3. *Assistance*. The Clark Academic Center (learning@calvary.edu), located in the library building, is dedicated to providing free academic assistance for all students. Student tutors aid with all facets of the writing process, tutor in various subject areas, prepare students for exams, and facilitate tests. Please take advantage of this service.
4. *Disabilities*. Students with disabilities have the responsibility of informing the DSS Director (dss@calvary.edu) of any disabling condition that may require support.