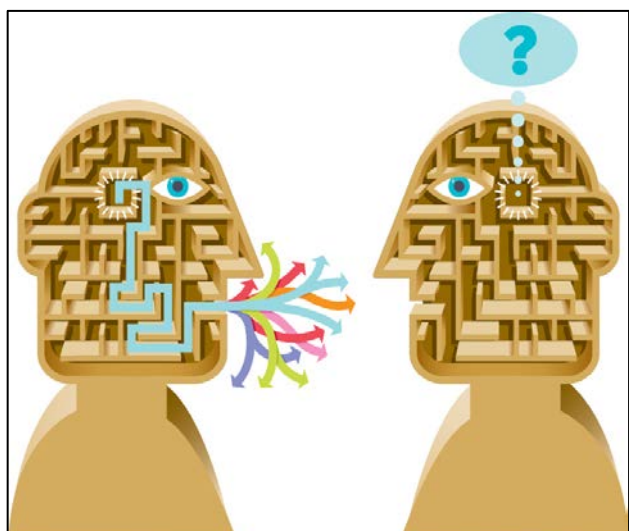




**MCMASTER DIVINITY COLLEGE
COURSE SYLLABUS
FALL 2021**

**GUIDE TO BIBLICAL LANGUAGES: HEBREW
(OT 1B03)**



INSTRUCTOR:

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CO-LECTURER:

Jacob Tomc, MDiv
Email: TBA

Online Asynchronous/Synchronous: Most of the work is asynchronous. **Weekly online synchronous classes/workshops will be held using WebEx on Wednesdays from 1pm-2:50pm.**

There will be a course web page on [Avenue to Learn](#) (A2L).

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Note: This is an online course. Students must have a basic familiarity with computers in order to participate, including the ability to navigate web sites, videoconference,¹ and make and upload PDFs of assignments (from Word: File > Save as PDF).

People like to talk about what the Bible means, sometimes even with reference to “the original Hebrew.” However, for readers and teachers of the Bible to access useful resources and make insightful observations about the meaning of a text without making regrettable errors, they need to understand how languages make meaning—and how Hebrew makes meaning. This course explores the world of human language: language theory and how it applies to understanding texts. It will also review English grammar—

¹ Webex is free for students when the professor sets up the meetings. Here is a basic video explaining how Webex works: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fE5FnEUKtaE> (for the purposes of this video, you are the woman logging on).

which many students were never taught—as a basis for understanding Hebrew grammar. This will enable students to be better prepared to engage with our main task: learning the basics of Hebrew, focusing on how the linguistic elements lead to meaningful and accurate interpretation. There will necessarily be some memorization of vocabulary and the three main paradigms, but this course will also significantly reduce the amount of memorization usually required in language learning, since the focus is on understanding and application.



This course will appeal to two types of students:


1. Those who want to begin the process of learning biblical languages, especially those who plan on doing more advanced learning. Subsequent courses will teach the intelligent use of Hebrew resources as well as a more detailed knowledge of the languages and application to the biblical text.
2. Those who do not plan to study biblical languages in depth (or those who are not sure whether they do) but want to understand how languages work, how to move from one language to another, and how to interpret the biblical text responsibly. Those who want to continue with deeper study may do so.

OT 1B03 MDiv/MTS Specializations: (BS/PS) Biblical Studies, Pastoral Studies (See <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/apply/specializations/>)

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES



- a.  Knowing
 - To know the major grammatical categories in English and Hebrew
 - To understand how language makes meaning
 - To understand the functions of language such as the interpersonal, experiential, and textual
 - To understand what constitutes a legitimate “word study”
 - 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

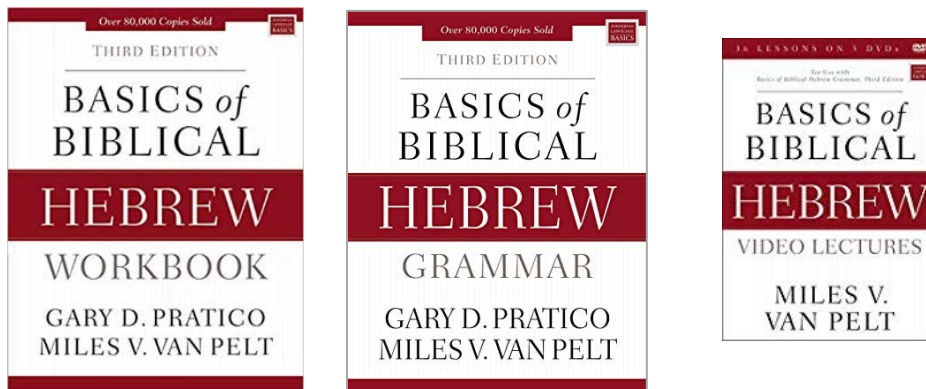
III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. TEXTS AND RESOURCES

NOTE: This course will be conducted as a “flipped classroom.” Students will read the text and view the video lectures and then complete exercises before class. The weekly online classroom/workshop time (via Webex) will be dedicated to answering questions, clarifying concepts, consolidating learning, discussing interpretation, and practicing skills. These online synchronous classes/workshops will be arranged at a time that is mutually convenient for the students and professor. They are recorded and made available privately to students for review and asynchronous study.

1. Workbook (required)

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

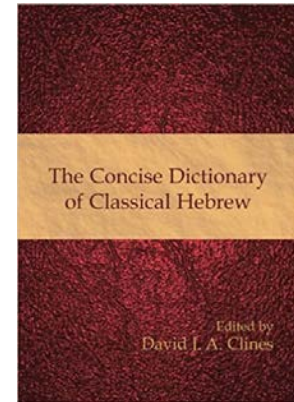


2. Grammar Text (required)

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

3. Lexicon

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



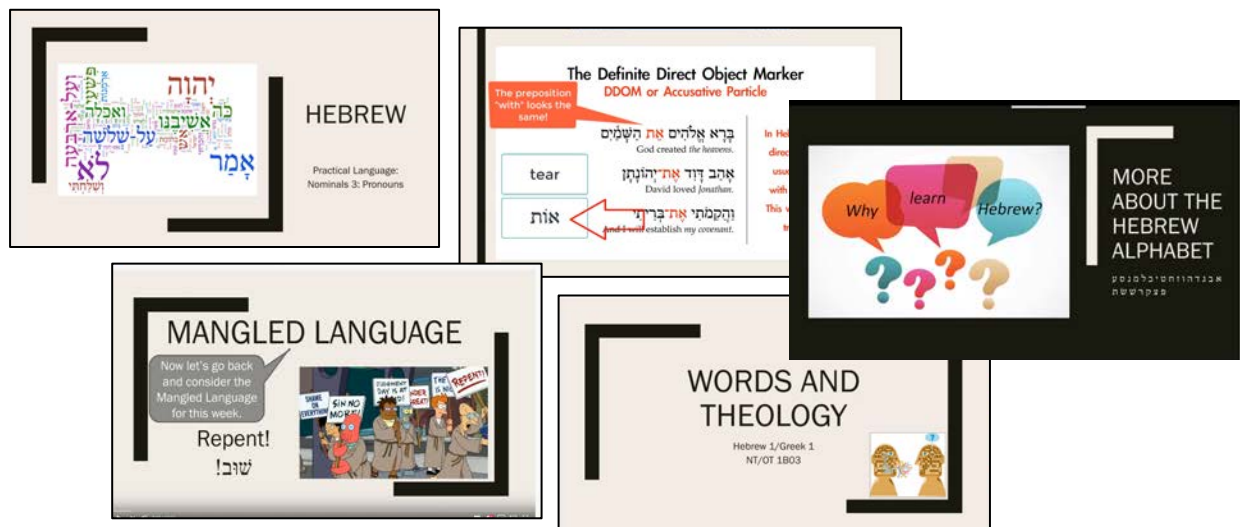
4. BBH Video Lectures (optional)²

Van Pelt, Miles. *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Video Lectures*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019. ASIN: 0310538602

NOTE: Some students say that they prefer learning just from the textbook rather than the BBH video lectures. However, many visual/aural learners find them very helpful. Learning styles differ, and you know yourself best. A sample lecture is available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76lyeFx9jXs>. The PPT slides used in these videos will be posted free online. If you do not think the BBH videos will be helpful, you may choose not to use them. You may find that the MDC videos, which are required, are enough.

5. MDC Video Lectures (required)

A series of video lectures has been prepared specifically for this course, focusing on language theory and interpretation. They also review and expand textbook concepts. They are free and available on A2L.



² These video lectures will also be useful for the subsequent online course, Hebrew 2 Morphology OT 2C03. The video lectures are not available in our bookstore. They may be purchased online from Amazon or Chapters-Indigo as a set of discs that covers both Hebrew 1 and 2, or purchased a download from <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/bbh>. For the download options there is “instant delivery.” They may also be available from other sources, such as Christianbook, LLC.

6. Logos Bible Software (optional)

Academic Basic: available free from <https://www.logos.com/academic-basic>. You will need to register and download the program. We will discuss how to use this resource effectively without becoming dependent on it.

Textbook Purchase: All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, located in the Hurlburt Family Bookstore off Cullen Hall, 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. You can arrange to have books sent to you. Other book services may also carry the texts.

B. 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.

(A number of other vocabulary and supplemental resources are given on A2L.)

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) This free site is very helpful in learning to pronounce Hebrew.

C. PROCTORING

This is an online course and, especially in this difficult time when we are dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, all tests and exams will be proctored remotely using Webex or a similar video conferencing application such as Zoom or Skype. Detailed instructions will be given on A2L and in the workshops.

D. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Exercises (Practicing the Grammar)	30%
Vocabulary Quizzes	10%
Term Test	20%
Sermon or Commentary Analysis	20%
Exam	20%
Total Grade	100%

Assignment Details:

Note: All assignments must be submitted to the appropriate Assignment Box on Avenue to Learn (A2L) in PDF format only.

Bonus Activity: Mangled Language Discussions: up to 5% bonus.

Each week a question will be posted in a discussion on A2L. It will deal with a “questionable” interpretation of a biblical text involving the use of language. Students who read and respond with a thoughtful comment to these will earn up to a 5% bonus mark in the course. These will be expanded on in the follow-up Mangled Language videos.

Assignment 1: Practical Exercises 30%. Due on October 7, October 21, November 12, December 7 at 11:30 pm. Marked on the schedule with *.

Students will complete weekly exercises from the BBH Workbook that involve the use of material covered in the BBH Text/Videos. The online workshops will focus in part on discussing and answering questions about these exercises to help you learn. We will work through examples together. **Students are required to complete at least the alternate questions in each section (1, 3, 5, etc. or a, c, e etc.).** Many students choose to do more for extra practice. These exercises will be collected and graded on four different dates. Students will memorize only the 3 most frequent paradigms. More details will be posted on A2L.

Assignment 2: Vocabulary 10%. Due as detailed below.

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 BBH 3rd edition materials and quizzed online regularly on A2L.

Assignment 3: Term Test: Hebrew 20%. Week of November 1–6.

There will be a term test on chapters 1 to 9 during the week of Nov 1. This will be conducted with online video monitoring at a time mutually agreeable to the students and the proctor. More information will be given on A2L.

Assignment 4: Sermon or Commentary Analysis 20%. Due on Tuesday, Nov 30 by 11:30 pm (marked on the schedule with **)

Evaluate and critique a sermon, article, or an excerpt of a commentary (which will be provided by the instructor) in terms of the handling of the original Hebrew language. Students should utilize what they learn in class and identify the common exegetical and linguistic fallacies. At least 5 resources other than lexicons and grammars must be consulted. The entire report should be around **8 pages** and must follow the “McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses.” Details will be provided on A2L.




Assignment 5: Exam 20%. Due by Friday, December 10

Information will be given in class.

Policy for Late Assignments:

Marks will be deducted for late assignments if there is no valid reason, such as illness (a doctor’s note may be required) or serious family crisis. The deduction will be 3% per day. Extensions must be approved before the due date.

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE

Wk	Week of	Interpretation (MDC Videos on A2L) ³	Language Theory (MDC Videos on A2L)	Why Learn Hebrew? ⁴ (MDC Videos on A2L)	Practical Hebrew (BBH Videos/Text and MDC Videos)
1	Sep 13	Mangled Language 1: TBA	Introduction and Syllabus	More about: the Alphabet	Aleph-bet, Vowels, Pronunciation: Names, Forms, Sounds. BBH 1-3
2	Sep 20	Mangled Language 2: Theologizing	Theory 1: Functions of Language	More about: Vowels	Aleph-bet, Vowels, Pronunciation: Continued.
3	Sep 27 Aleph-bet and Vowel Quiz Sep 28	Mangled Language 3: TBA	Theory 2: Words and Theology	More about: Nouns	Nominal Systems 1: Parts of Speech. Person, gender, number. Nouns (Paradigm), Article, Conjunction Waw. BBH 4-5
4	Oct 4 Vocab 1 to Ch 5 Oct 5 Wkbk to Ch 5 Oct 7*	Mangled Language 4: Soul	Theory 3: Form and Function; Syntax and Semantics	More about: Prepositions	Nominal Systems 2: Phrases and Prepositions, Adjectives BBH 6-7
5	Oct 11  Thanksgiving Oct 11  Vocab 2 to Ch 7 Oct 12 	Mangled Language 5: Word Studies and Lexicons	Theory 4: Lexicons for Hebrew and Word Studies	More about: Pronouns	Nominal Systems 3: Pronouns: personal, relative, demonstrative, interrogative. BBH 8

³ These are short (15–20 min) videos dealing with misinterpretations. An opportunity for bonus marks.

⁴ These are short (10–15 min) examples of the interesting application of Hebrew to actual Bible study to show why learning Hebrew is relevant. No assignments are involved.

6 ⁵	Oct 18 Wkbk to Ch 9 Oct 21* Vocab 3 to Ch 9 Oct 22	Mangled Language 6: TBA	--	More About: Lexicons (Gen 3:16)	Nominal Systems 4: Pronouns: objective, possessive. BBH 9
7	Oct 25 Intensive Hybrid Week—No Class				
8	Nov 1 Term Test to Ch 9 Due by Nov 5	Mangled Language 8: TBA	--	More about: Construct Chains	Nominal Systems 5: Construct Chains; Numbers. BBH 10-11 Term Test to Chapter 9
9	Nov 8 Wkbk to Ch 12 Nov 12*	Mangled Language 9: Visions	Theory 5: Exegetical Fallacies 1	More about: The Perfect as “Past Tense”	Verbal Systems 1: Tense/Aspect/Mood; Stems; Qal Perfect Strong (Paradigm). BBH 12-13
10	Nov 15 Vocab 4 to Ch 12 Nov 16	Mangled Language 10: Be Holy	Theory 6: Exegetical Fallacies 2	More about: “Tense” (Adam and the Genome)	Verbal Systems 2: Finite/Non-finite; Qal Perfect Weak. BBH 14
11	Nov 22 Vocab 5 to Ch 14 Nov 23	Mangled Language 11: Hebrew Discourse	Theory 7: Meaning, Choice, Ranks	More about: The Imperfect	Verbal Systems 3: Qal Imperfect Strong (Paradigm). BBH 15
12	Nov 29 Analysis Nov 30** Vocab 6 to Ch 16 Dec 3	Mangled Language 12: TBA	Theory 8: Discourse (Hebrew)	More about: Wayehi וַיְהִי	Verbal Systems 4: Qal Imperfect Weak. BBH 16
13	Dec 6 Wkbk to Ch 16 Dec 7* Exam due by Dec 10	--	Theory Review: Summary and 1 Sam 15	--	Exam to Chapter 16

V. CLASSROOM BEHAVIOUR, ATTENDANCE, AND PARTICIPATION

- All thoughtful student participation is welcome. There are no “dumb questions” or “stupid answers.” Students will respect the contributions of other students, although they may disagree, and respond to them without ridicule or scorn.
- Students are expected to attend all online classes. Missing a class in order to work on other assignments is a consequence of poor planning and is unacceptable. If you are genuinely ill or there is a serious emergency, your absence is acceptable. Please email the professor to explain.
- Students are expected to be on time for class. Admittedly, unavoidable delays do occasionally happen. If you arrive late, please email an explanation to the professor after class.
- Students are also expected to stay for the entire class session.

⁵ Hybrid Weeks

VI. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Style

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses

<https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/>. Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

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 the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. 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 the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty at <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>.

Disclaimer: This syllabus is the property of the instructors 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.