

BIBLICAL HEBREW I

2025–2026 First Term Mon 9:30pm–11:15pm FYB UG01; Thur 10:30am–11:15pm CKB UG04
[Program: BD, MTh]

Course Code: THEO3217

Title in English: Biblical Hebrew I

Title in Chinese: 聖經希伯來文 (一)

Course Description:

This course, and the sequel THEO3218/THEO5302 Biblical Hebrew II in the next term, are designed to enable students to read Biblical Hebrew. In this course, Biblical Hebrew I, students learn starting from the alphabets to the basic forms of Hebrew sentences. Students not only learn how to read simple sentences from the Hebrew bible, but also pronounce the words. Students will also learn some Hebrew songs which accompany the lessons. This course follows closely to its textbook, Learn Biblical Hebrew by John H. Dobson (2005). Biblical Hebrew I will cover Lessons 1-13 and the rest of the book will be covered in Biblical Hebrew II.

Learning Outcomes:

Knowledge Outcomes:

- (1) recite and write down from memory the Hebrew alphabets, vowels and their transliterations;
- (2) pronounce and read Hebrew words;
- (3) recite from memory Genesis 1:1 (D 1.13 p. 18); Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (D 5.6 p. 55); the songs We welcome you (D 1.13 Q5 p. 16) and Blessed are You (D 5.9 Q6 p. 58);
- (4) memorize at least 300 Hebrew words perfectly by the end of the course;
- (5) recognize words, identify and parse them correctly as nouns, verbs, prepositions, constructs, suffixes, adjectives, infinitives or participles;
- (6) identify the forms of questions, commands and requests;
- (7) (a) explain the usage of adjectives, participles, infinitives, prefix and suffix conjugations, as well as concepts of perfective and non-perfective; (b) also deduce the functions of the above in a Hebrew sentence and able to identify basic grammar implications in simple Hebrew sentences or phrases.

Attitude Outcomes:

- (1) develop an interest and respect for the historical and cultural development of the Hebrew language from its paleo-Hebrew script until its Aramaic script, and the modern form of Hebrew language;
- (2) appreciate the distinctiveness of the language;
- (3) cultivate an interest to read Biblical Hebrew texts.

List of Topics

1. The Hebrew Alphabets and Vowels
2. Word Order in Sentences
3. The Prenominal Suffixes and Pronouns
4. The Narrative (waw Prefix Conjugation/waPC) and Completed (Suffix Conjugation/SC) Action
5. Parsing
6. The Adjectives
7. The Continuing Action (Prefix Conjugation/PC)
8. Absolute and Construct Nouns
9. The Previous and Future Action

10. Commands and Requests
11. Possession and Questions
12. Participles
13. Infinitives
14. Numbers, Time and Measurements

Learning Activities:

We will do a lot of drilling exercises through different forms: in songs, oral recitation, oral exercises, dialogue and writing exercises. There will be reinforcements through one to one and small group interactions throughout the course.

Feedback for Evaluation:

Two course evaluations will be conducted. The first will be done midway through the course which is tailored to facilitate better progress through the course. The second will be conducted by the university wide exercise.

Course Components:

The course consists of lectures, oral drills, written assignments and a lot of memorization, self and group revisions. The time allocation (on average per week) of the learning activities is as follows:									
Lecture		Class interaction		Excursion/ Web-based Learning		Reading and research		Written assignments	
In class	Out of Class	In class	Out of Class	In class	Out of Class	In class	Out of Class	In class	Out of Class
1.2 hrs	NA	1 hr	NA	NA	NA	NA	1.5 hrs	0.5 hr	2 hrs
M		M		M		M		M	
M: Mandatory activity in the course					O: Optional activity				

Assessment Scheme:

Task Nature and Weightage	Purpose and Rationale	Learning Outcomes
<p>1. Active Participation (9%) Students must participate <i>proactively</i> in class as required: <i>Proactive</i> refers to learning activities where students are expected to verbalize pronunciation of words learned, sing, recite verbally – all in audible volume to their partners, or instructor or to keep pace with the whole class.</p> <p>Should foreseeable circumstances prevent a student from attending a class, the student must notify the instructor and teaching assistant (TA) by email. The student is expected to make up the missing class on his/her own through the materials posted on Blackboard and/or personal arrangement with the instructor and TA. There would be a deduction of 0.5% of the overall grade for</p>	<p>Language courses require constant drilling, and due to the fact that Biblical Hebrew is a dead language, absence from any period will result in difficulties to catch up for each class period.</p> <p>1. Students will follow the smooth progress of building upon each topic as the language is taught. 2. Students get immediate</p>	<p>1. Students can follow the progress of each topic smoothly. 2. Students build upon each new concept of the language based on the previous one. 3. Students can reinforce the learning through active use of the language. 4. Student learns to reinforce their own understanding with co-learners and the instructor.</p>

<p>each missed session of tutorial/lecture regardless of the nature of the absence.</p>	<p>reinforcements for each new word or concept learned.</p>	
<p>2. 12 Quizzes (33%) Q1: Alphabets; transliteration Q2: Short and Long Vowels; Shewa; Vocabulary 1-A + D 1.13 2(a) & 2.7 Q3: Paradigm for preposition ׀ + pronominal suffixes (D 3.10) and Vocabulary 1-B + D 3.1, 3.3, 3.5 & 3.7 Q4: Paradigm for Pronouns (D 4.8; p. 46 column 1) and Paradigm for Suffix Conjugation (SC verbs) (D 4.8 table and column 2); Vocabulary 1-C + D 4.1, 4.3; Parsing Q5: Vocabularies 1-D + D 5.1 (1), 5.5; Parsing. Q6: Vocabulary 2-A + D 6.1 p.60 column 1, D 6.4; p. 63 column 1) and Parsing Q7: Vocabulary 2-B Q8: Vocabulary 2-C + D 7.2 p.77 column 1, 7.11; Demonstrative Pronouns (D 7.10); Imperative Paradigm (D 7.12 p.86 Row 1); Visual Display (D 7.12 p.88) Q9: Vocabulary 2-D + D 8.1; Paradigm for Prefix Conjugation verbs (PC verbs) p. 354 and Parsing Q10: Vocabulary 2-E + D 9.1, 9.7 and Parsing Q11: Vocabulary 3-A + D 10.4, 10.6, 10.7; Imperative, Jussive, and Cohortative; Negation</p>	<p>The quizzes are to reinforce the <i>accumulation</i> of the foundational vocabularies and paradigms.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students' memorization of the vocabularies will aid the learning progress when examples are based on these foundational words. 2. Students' memorization of the paradigms will aid the learning progress of grammar concepts foundational to the language. 3. Students will be able to read and understand simple sentences from the Hebrew Bible. 4. Students will be able to parse phrases as they read and will be able to process the meanings of the words automatically with more practice.
<p>3. Written Assignments (18%) During class lectures, the instructor will assign a few written assignments where students are required to write on the board, or on their own notebooks. Students are expected to follow these instructions and attempt to complete them.</p>	<p>To grasp Biblical Hebrew fully, the written form is quintessential. It aids recognition and reinforces memory. Writing out the assignments retains the learning in concrete form.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students reinforce the concepts by active application of the language through these written assignments. 2. Students get the opportunity for immediate reinforcements in class through these assignments.
<p>4. Oral Test (10%) Students memorize 2 songs: We welcome you (D 1.13 Q5; p. 16) and Blessed are You (D 5.9 Q6; p. 58); and 2 scripture texts: Genesis 1:1 (D 2.4; p. 18); Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (D 5.6; p. 55).</p>	<p>Biblical Hebrew is the language of the Torah, the scripture of Judeo-Christian religion, memorization of core scripture and songs for worship enhance the purpose for learning of the</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students learn to appreciate the religious practice of scripture memorization. 2. Students learn to sing from memory as part of religious worship and prayer.

	language – which is to read the Torah or Hebrew Bible.	3. Students appreciate the Jewish religious cultural practices based on scripture. 4. Students build confidence to verbalize the Hebrew words through scripture and songs.
4. Final Test (30%) This test comprises of the contents of the final 4 topics; and the general accumulation of learning basic grammar sentences, and parsing. In addition to the content of quizzes 1 to 11, the test also includes Vocabulary 3-B + D 11.2, 11.4, 11.8, 11.9 p.139 column 1; Cardinal and Ordinal Numbers; Visual Display (D 11.10 p.140).	This final test wraps up the end of the basics of the course.	Same as Task #2.

Recommended Learning Resources:

Textbooks (required):

Dobson, John H. *Learn Biblical Hebrew*. 2nd edition with Audio CD-Rom. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005. [D; UL PJ4567.3 .D63 2014]

Recommended Learning Resources:

Brown, Francis, S.R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, eds. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1907. (CC Ref PJ4833 .G4 1907;
<https://biblehub.com/bdb/1.htm>)

Cook, J.A. and Holmstedt, R.D. *Beginning Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2013. [UL PJ4567.3 .C66 2013]

Kahn, Lily. *The Routledge Introductory Course in Biblical Hebrew*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2014. [UL PJ4567.3 .K34 2014]

Kelley, Page H. *Biblical Hebrew: An Introduction Grammar*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1992. (2nd Edition revised by Timothy G. Crawford, 2018)

Pratico, Gary D. and Miles V. van Pelt. *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar*. 2nd edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014. [UL Oversize PJ4567.3 .P73 2014]

Seow, Choon-Leong. *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*. Rev. ed.; Nashville: Abingdon, 1995. [UL PJ4567 .S424 1995]

Webster, Brian L. *The Cambridge Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University, 2009. [UL PJ4567.3 .W357 2009]

Internet Resources:

Introduction to Resources over Internet: <http://ehebrew.net/learn-ancient-hebrew/>

Animated Hebrew (Cartoon): <http://www.animatedhebrew.com/>

eteacher Biblical Hebrew (Free Lesson): <http://eteacherbiblical.com/free-lessons>

App Resources:

Quizlet – Join soniawk’s class “Biblical Hebrew I” for Vocabulary Lists 1-A to 3-B.

Write It! Hebrew; Hebrew Flashcards; Bible App by Olive Tree

Course Schedule:

Week	Date	Topic
1	Sept 1 (M) Sept 4 (Th)	Introduction: Basic Grammar and Biblical Hebrew Lesson 1A & 2A: Learning Vowels and Alphabets Songs: Aleph-Bet Song and We Welcome You Quiz 1; Lesson 1B & 2B: Shewa, rules on Dagesh and Sentence Order Reading Hebrew: Gen 1:1 and Drills
2	Sept 8 (M) Sept 11 (Th)	Lesson 3: Pronominal Suffix, Pronouns and SC & waPC Verbs Quiz 2; Introduction to Lessons 4–6
3	Sept 15 (M) Sept 18 (Th)	Lesson 4: Narrative and Completed Action Quiz 3; Revision and Learning to Parse, Drills
4	Sept 22 (M) Sept 25 (Th)	Lesson 5: Adjectives Parsing Drills and Written Assignment Song: Blessed Are You (D 5.9, p.58) Quiz 4; Parsing Drills
5	Sept 29 (M) Oct 2 (Th)	Lesson 6: Continuing Action and PC Verbs Quiz 5; Memorize Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (D 5.6; p. 55)
6	Oct 6 (M) Oct 9 (Th)	Introduction to Lesson 7–8 Quiz 6; Drills and Written Assignment
7	Oct 13 (M) Oct 16 (Th)	Lesson 7: Absolute and Construct Nouns Quiz 7; Drills and Written Assignment
8	Oct 20 (M) Oct 23 (Th)	Lesson 8: Previous and Future Action and PC & waSC Verbs Quiz 8; Drills and Written Assignment
9	Oct 27 (M) Oct 30 (Th)	Introduction to Lessons 9–13 Lesson 9: Possession and Questions Quiz 9; Drills and Written Assignment
10	Nov 3 (M) Nov 6 (Th)	Lesson 10: Commands and Requests Congregation. No Class.
11	Nov 10 (M) Nov 13 (Th)	Lesson 12: Infinitives Quiz 10; Lesson 11: Numbers, Time, and Measurements Drills and Written Assignment
12	Nov 17 (M) Nov 20 (Th)	Lesson 13: Participles Revision for Final Test Quiz 11; Oral Test
13	Nov 24 (M) Nov 27 (Th)	Final Test Go through Answers for Final Test

Contact Details for Teacher and Teaching Assistant:

Lecturer:	Sonia Kwok WONG (王珺)
Office:	KKB 324
Tel:	39435150
Email:	sonia.wong@cuhk.edu.hk
Office Hour:	By Appointment
TA:	Don Yiu Kong LEE (李耀江)
Email:	donlee@link.cuhk.edu.hk

All use of AI tools is prohibited:

In any kind of learning activity or assessment that will be counted towards the final course grades (or used for evaluating attainment of the desired learning outcomes), students are not allowed to submit work which is produced with the collaboration of or supported by the use of any AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT)*.

Improper/unauthorized use of AI tools in learning activities and assessments will constitute acts of academic dishonesty and will be handled according to the University's Procedures for Handling Cases of Academic Dishonesty.

In case of queries, students should seek advice from the course teacher.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism: The CUHK policy and regulations regarding academic honesty apply to all work in this course. Information in this regard may be found at the following link: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.