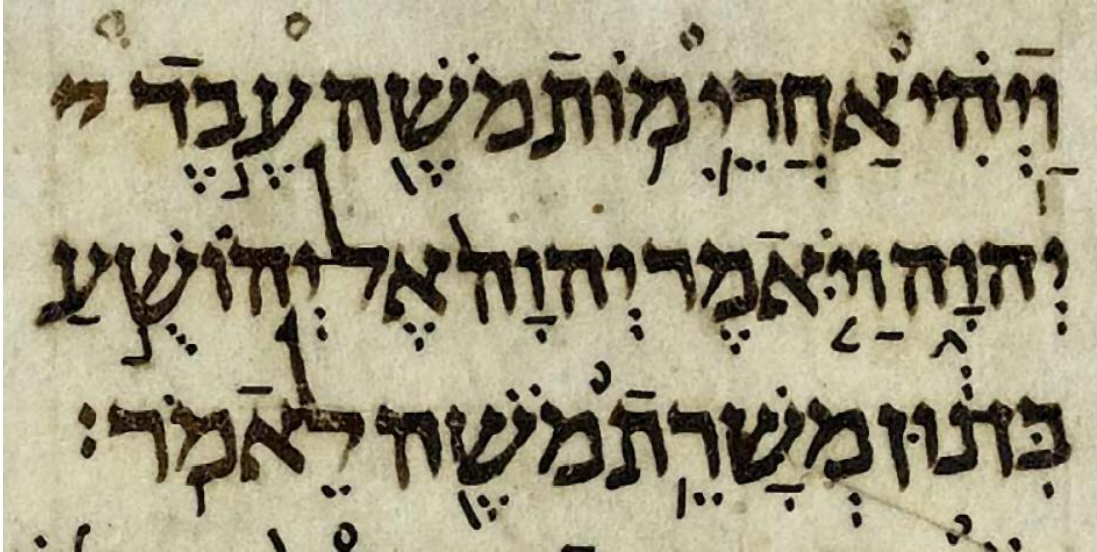


# Elementary Biblical Hebrew I

DIV/REL 2500.01

MWF 8:10-9 a.m.



Joshua 1:1, from the Aleppo Codex, a 10<sup>th</sup> century C.E. manuscript of the Hebrew Bible

**Instructor:** Caryn Tamber-Rosenau

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**Office hours:** By appointment, Monday and Wednesday afternoons

**Course Description:** The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) is written in an ancient Semitic language known as biblical Hebrew. This is a rich and beautiful language. Understanding it will help you to better appreciate the stories and artistry of the Bible and to grapple with the text, assessing the merits of existing translations and arriving at your own interpretations of the biblical material. Along with the spring semester course, this class will introduce you to the fundamentals of biblical Hebrew.

## Course Goals:

- To understand the benefits of reading the Hebrew Bible in Hebrew, and to make significant inroads into being able to read and interpret on your own.
- To learn the basics of biblical Hebrew grammar and syntax, including crucial concepts such as the Hebrew root system and verb parsing.
- To build a basic vocabulary in biblical Hebrew, consisting generally of the words used most frequently in the Bible.
- To learn how to use supplementary tools such as lexicons to read and interpret the Bible.

## **Grading:**

Attendance and Participation: 10%  
Quizzes (lowest quiz grade dropped): 20%  
Assignments to be handed in: 15%  
Midterm: 25%  
Final: 30%

The grading scale is the same as for other courses in the Divinity School (97-100%=A+, 94-96%=A, 90-93%=A-, etc.)

## **Course Requirements and Policies:**

1. In a language class, attendance and punctuality are especially crucial. New concepts will be introduced almost every class session, so students are strongly encouraged to make attendance and punctuality a priority. Excessive absences or lateness will affect a student's grade. If you must miss class, please *let me know in advance* if at all possible; it will be your responsibility to make up work that you have missed.
2. Class participation is important! Please come to each class prepared to read aloud, go over the homework, and contribute to class discussions.
3. It is impossible to pay attention and participate if you are checking your e-mail or on Facebook, so I ask that you refrain from using your computer, tablet, or phone for any non-class-related purposes during class time.
4. Quizzes will be given every week, usually on Fridays. The quizzes will cover mainly vocabulary, but there will also be basic questions about grammatical concepts we have covered that week. For instance, students may be asked to pluralize a singular noun or write out a verb paradigm. Quizzes may not be made up after the fact but may be taken in advance if a student will be absent on quiz day. The vocabulary portion of each quiz will cover predominantly vocabulary from the week's assigned chapters, but I will always include at least one vocabulary word from a previous chapter. Students are encouraged to make (or purchase) flashcards and review all vocabulary regularly.
5. Students will be asked to hand in the occasional set of completed homework exercises from the textbook. These will be graded predominantly on completeness. There will also be periodic exegesis exercises to hand in, which will be graded on completeness and merit.
6. I highly recommend forming study groups. Getting together to read aloud and discuss class material will be beneficial to you and may help to keep you on task. (Copying classmates' homework, however, is a no-no—and extremely short-sighted.)
7. Students will take a midterm and final exam. The final will be cumulative but will focus more on content covered during the second half of the class. The midterm will be taken during class time. The date and time of the final are set by the University part-way through the semester; as soon as I know this information, I will let you know.

**Required Books:**

(available at the Vanderbilt bookstore or through an online vendor; the textbook will also be on reserve at the Divinity Library circulation desk, while the BHS and lexicon are always available for in-library use in Subject Study Area 2)

Textbook: Kelley, Page H. *Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.

Bible: Elliger, Karl and Willhelm Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS). Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1990.

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

**Honor Code:**

The Vanderbilt University Honor Code governs all aspects of this class. Cheating will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade on the assignment and possibly a referral to the Honor Council. Please see me if you are unsure how the Honor Code applies to a given assignment.

**Special Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

To receive reasonable accommodations for a disability at Vanderbilt University, students are to apply for services through the Disability Services Program. If you have a letter from the DSP granting you such accommodations, please make an appointment to discuss the matter with me.

**Prolonged Illness or Other Emergency:**

If you experience a prolonged illness, family emergency, or other situation that will cause you to miss class sessions and/or assignments, please notify Dean Townes' office. The dean will then contact all of your professors and instructors to notify them of the situation.

## Course schedule:

### Week 1:

Monday, August 18

In class: Introductions

Syllabus review

The first half of the alef bet and three vowels

Homework: Handout from *The First Hebrew Primer*-Exercises 2, 3, 7 (1-3)

Wednesday, August 20

In class: The second half of the alef bet and more vowels

Final letter forms

Homework: Handout from *The First Hebrew Primer*-Exercises 1, 2, 5 (just circle)

Friday, August 22

In class: Alef bet review

Long and short vowels

Quiz: Alef bet

Homework: Kelley chapter 2 exercises 1, 3 (1-8 only), 4, 5

### Week 2:

Monday, August 25

In class: The *maqfef*

Direct-object indicator

Workshop on using *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon*

Homework: Kelley chapter 2 exercises 6 and 9 (9:17-24 only; practice pronouncing but do not transliterate)

Wednesday, August 27

In class: The *dagesh* and the BeGaD KeFaT letters

Homework: Kelley chapter 3 exercise 1

Friday, August 29

In class: The *dagesh*

Quiz: Vowels, vocabulary of Kelley chapter 3

Homework: Kelley chapter 3 exercise 2

Week 3:

Monday, September 1

In class: The *sheva*

Homework: Chapter 3 exercise 5

Wednesday, September 3

In class: The *sheva*

Guttural letters

Homework: Chapter 3 exercise 4

Friday, September 5: Accent marks

*Mappiq*

Syllables

Quiz: *Dagesh* and *sheva*, vocabulary of chapter 5

Homework: Chapter 4 exercises 2, 3, 4-**Hand in**

Week 4:

Monday, September 8

In class: The definite article

Homework: Chapter 5 exercises 2 and 3

Wednesday, September 10

In class: Prepositions

Homework: Chapter 6 exercises 1 and 2

Friday, September 12

In class: *Vav* as a conjunction

Workshop on using BHS

Quiz: Guttural letters, the definite article, vocabulary of chapter 6

Homework: Chapter 6 exercises 3 and 4 (even numbers only)

Week 5:

Monday, September 15

In class: Nouns

Homework: Chapter 7 exercises 1 and 2-**Hand in**

Wednesday, September 17

In class: Nouns

Homework: Chapter 7 exercises 4 and 5

Friday, September 19

In class: Adjectives

Quiz: Nouns, vocabulary of chapter 7

Homework: Chapter 8 exercises 2-4

Week 6:

Monday, September 22

In class: Pronouns

Homework: Chapter 9 exercises 1-2

Wednesday, September 24

In class: Adjectives and pronouns review

Quiz: Adjectives, vocabulary of chapters 8 and 9

Homework: Exegesis Assignment 1-**Hand in**

Friday, September 26: **NO CLASS** (Rosh Hashanah--ראש השנה)

Week 7:

Monday, September 29

In class: Segholate nouns

Nouns in construct

Homework: Chapter 10 exercises 1, 2, 5

Wednesday, October 1

In class: Nouns in construct

Pronominal suffixes

Homework: Chapter 11 exercise 1

Friday, October 3

In class: Pronominal suffixes

Quiz: Pronouns, vocabulary of chapters 10 and 11

Homework: Chapter 11 exercises 2-3

Week 8:

Monday, October 6:

In class: Review for midterm

Homework: Study!

Wednesday, October 8:

In class: Review for midterm

Homework: Study!

Friday, October 10: **MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS** (grammar and vocabulary up to chapter 11)

Week 9:

Monday, October 13

In class: The Qal verb

Homework: Chapter 12 exercises 1 and 2

Wednesday, October 15

In class: The Qal verb

Quiz: Vocabulary of chapter 12

Homework: Chapter 12 exercises 5 and 6-**Hand in**

Friday, October 17: **NO CLASS** (Fall Break—Have fun!)

Week 10:

Monday, October 20

In class: Interrogative sentences

Numerals

Homework: Chapter 13 exercises 1 (odds only), 3 (odds only), and 4 (1-8)

Wednesday, October 22

In class: Parsing verbs

Homework: Exegesis Assignment 2-**Hand in**

Friday, October 24

In class: The *binyan* system

*Qal, Niphal, Piel, Pual*

Quiz: The Qal Perfect of the strong verb, vocabulary of chapter 13

Homework: Chapter 14 exercise 2

Week 11:

Monday, October 27

In class: *Hitpael, Hiphil, Hophal*

Perfects of the strong verb across the *binyanim*

Homework: Chapter 14 exercises 1, 3, and 4

Wednesday, October 29

In class: The Qal imperfect of the strong verb

Homework: Chapter 15 exercises 1, 2

Friday, October 31

In class: Jussive and cohortative verbs

Quiz: The perfect verb across the *binyanim*, vocabulary of chapters 14 and 15

Homework: Chapter 15 exercises 3, 4

Week 12:

Monday, November 3

In class: Imperfects of *qal, niph'al, piel, pual*

Homework: Exegesis assignment 3-**Hand in**

Wednesday, November 5

In class: Imperfects of *hitpael, hiphil, hophal*

Homework: Chapter 16 exercise 1

Friday, November 7

In class: *Vav*-consecutive imperfect

Directional *he*

Quiz: The imperfect verb across the *binyanim*, vocabulary of chapter 16

Homework: Chapter 16 exercises 2 (evens), 3 (evens), 4 (evens)



Week 13:

Monday, November 10

In class: Pronominal suffixes on verbs

Homework: Chapter 17 exercises 1-3

Wednesday, November 12

In class: Pronominal suffixes on verbs

The imperative verb

Homework: Chapter 18 exercises 5, 7

Friday, November 14

In class: The imperative verb

Negative commands

Quiz: Pronominal suffixes, vocabulary of chapters 17 and 18

Homework: Chapter 18 exercises 1, 3, 6-**Hand in**

Week 14:

Monday, November 17

In class: The infinitive absolute

The infinitive construct

Homework: Chapter 19 exercises 1, 2, 4

Wednesday, November 19

In class: The participle

Homework: Chapter 20 exercises 1, 3, 4

Friday, November 21

In class: Verb synopses

Quiz: The imperative, vocabulary of chapters 19 and 20

Homework: Happy Thanksgiving!

## **THANKSGIVING BREAK**

Week 15:

Monday, December 1

In class: Review for final

Homework: Study!

Wednesday, December 3

In class: Review for final

Homework: Study!

**FINAL EXAM, TIME AND DATE TBD** (grammar and vocabulary up to chapter 20)