



**BRISBANE COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY  
BACHELOR OF THEOLOGY  
UNIT OUTLINE**

UNIT TITLE	BIBLICAL HEBREW
UNIT CODE	A52110
UNIT STATUS	Elective
HOST FIELD	A/B
PREREQUISITE/S	Nil
INCOMPATIBLES	Nil
CREDIT POINTS	10cp
REQUIREMENTS	3 hours per week contact and 7 hours per week study over a 13-week semester.
FREQUENCY OF OFFERING	Odd years – Semester 2
PREPARED BY	Rev Douglas Jones
UNIT COORDINATOR	Rev Douglas Jones
TEACHING STAFF	Rev Douglas Jones
DATE PREPARED	30 August 2006

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**Rationale**

Study and interpretation of the scriptures is an integral part of the life of the Christian church. Study of Biblical Hebrew provides students with an opportunity to gain a sound understanding and knowledge of one of the original languages of the Scriptures. Such understanding and knowledge provide a solid foundation for working with the Old Testament text in its original language and for using associated Hebrew language reference tools in the study and interpretation of the scriptures. A good working knowledge of Biblical Hebrew has an important place in scholarly study of the Old Testament and is particularly relevant to students who intend to specialise in Old Testament studies.

**Relation to program**

This unit contributes to the wider field of biblical studies and is important as it provides students with a working knowledge of Biblical Hebrew, enabling students to translate, exegete and interpret the scriptures working from the original language of the Old Testament. It thus enables appreciation of important literary features, rhetorical devices, and memory devices such as the use of word plays, assonance, alphabetic acrostics, and catchwords, which are present in the original language but are often not present when the text is translated into English.

## Aims

This unit aims to provide students with a basic working knowledge of the main elements of Biblical Hebrew (alphabet, form and function of nouns, adjectives, articles, adverbs and verbs, and the construction of basic sentences) and to assist students to develop competence in reading and translating Biblical Hebrew. It also aims to introduce students to and develop basic skills in using resources such as Hebrew concordances, lexicons, dictionaries and computer software (eg BibleWorks5) for use in translation and subsequent exegetical work.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	
At the end of this unit the student should be able to:	
1.	Use accurately the basic morphology, grammar and syntax of the Hebrew language;
2.	Read Hebrew words and sentences;
3.	Use Hebrew concordances, lexicons, dictionaries and computer software;
4.	Parse Hebrew words and translate Hebrew sentences into English.

## Content

- 1 The basic building blocks of the Hebrew language (including the alphabet, vowel signs, open and closed syllables, shewa, daghes, gutturals, accents, the metheg, etc)
- 2 The morphology of nouns (including absolute and construct states) and adjectives
- 3 The definite article and the sign of the definite object
- 4 Prepositions (separable and inseparable)
- 5 The morphology of regular verbs
- 6 Interrogatives and prohibitions
- 7 The structure of sentences
- 8 Regular reading and pronunciation of Hebrew

## Organization and Teaching Strategies

Teaching will be face-to-face. A textbook will be used and the lessons will be based upon the material from that textbook. An interactive process will be used in class with as much of the time as possible given to engaging with Hebrew text through reading, analysis, parsing and translation. The class will have frequent opportunities to practice pronunciation and translation. Translation technique will be regularly demonstrated through the use of analysis (particularly the identification of stems and prefixes and suffixes) and parsing of Hebrew words. Weekly homework, revision and tests will be used to reinforce the new concepts and vocabulary introduced in each session.

The format for the weekly three hour sessions will generally be:

- Revision. Reading and translation of weekly homework. Students will participate in reading, vocabulary drills, and in assisting with translation. (50 minutes)
- Break (10 minutes)
- Weekly Test (50 minutes)
- Break (10 minutes)
- Teaching of new material. (50 minutes)

## Assessment

	Type of assessment	No of words	Weighting %	Due date	Learning Outcomes covered
1	Weekly homework (including transliteration, translation and accessing concordances, lexicons, dictionaries and computer software)		20	Weekly	1, 3, 4
2	Weekly open book tests involving translation of Hebrew into English		30	Weekly	1, 3, 4
3	Mid-semester open book exam involving both written (translation of Hebrew words and sentences into English) and oral (reading aloud of words and basic sentences) components		25	Week 7	1, 2, 4
4	End-of-semester open book exam involving both written (translation of Hebrew words and sentences into English) and oral (reading aloud of words and basic sentences) components		25	Week 14	1, 2, 4

### Notes on Assessment

- Item 1 Will develop the student's ability to translate from Hebrew to English, using appropriate tools and technologies, and to understand some of the grammatical issues and textual issues peculiar to a text.
- Item 2 Will develop the student's knowledge of Hebrew language as a basis for biblical interpretation.
- Items 3 and 4 Will develop the student's ability to translate and use Hebrew as a basis for ongoing biblical study.

### Bibliography

#### Textbooks

- Kelley, Page H. *Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.
- Kelley, Page H., Terry L Burden & Timothy Crawford. *A Handbook to Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.

#### Recommended

- Weingreen, J. *A Practical Grammar for Classical Hebrew*. 2nd ed; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959.

#### References – Books

- Botterweck, GJ & H Ringren (eds). *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament: Volumes 1-14*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans (The volumes have been published progressively from 1974 to 2004).
- Brown, Francis, SR Driver & Charles C Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1974 (1<sup>st</sup> ed 1907).
- Clines, David JA (ed). *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew: Volumes I to V*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press (The volumes have been published progressively from 1993 to 2001).
- Elliger, K & W Rudolph (eds). *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*; 5th ed; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997.
- Jenni, E & C Westermann (eds). *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament: Volumes 1-3*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997 (English translation).

Koehler, Ludwig & Walter Baumgartner. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament: Volumes I-V*. Leiden: Brill, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1999, 2000.  
Saenz-Badillos, Angel. *A History of the Hebrew Language*. Cambridge: CUP, 1993.  
Seow, CL. *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*. Rev ed; Nashville: Abingdon, 1995.  
VanGemeren, Willem A (ed). *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis: Volumes 1-5*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.  
Würthheim, Ernst. *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica*. London: SCM, 1979.

### **References - Online and Other IT resources**

*BibleWorks 5*. Big Fork, Montana: Hermeneutika, 2001.  
*Navigating the Bible*. London: Davka, 1998.

### **Audio CD**

Pennington, Jonathan T. *Old Testament Hebrew Vocabulary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.