

BIBLICAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

ESSENTIALS IN HEBREW
Revision of 1991

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I. Introductory Notes for the Course:

A. How it all begins:

In certain limited programs in the Biblical Seminary curriculum basic languages are not required...apart from English! But many course that are later required in these same programs often make use of the underlying biblical languages, i.e. Hebrew and Greek. For awhile the Semninary tried teaching these courses in two modes: an original language mode and an English language mode. This placed a huge stress on the faculty and tended to confuse the instructors (not nearly so hard to do as you might think). So it was decided to try a modified course in which all students would receive basic instruction about the biblical languages and those not in the language courses would learn enough about the original tongue to understand its use and the points made by learned scholars as they lectured in the field. In other words, students not required to learn the language would know enough about it to have an intelligent apprehension of the subject...or something like that.

So two "tools" course were devised: one in Greek and one in Hebrew. The student does not learn the language in these classes but learns about the language. Hopefully in this process the student will learn enough to take advantage of the language tools (dictionaries, etc.) and gain a general understanding about the services the language provides. Essentials in Greek was born in the fall of 1990 and essentials in Hebrew came forth the following spring.

The instructor is still working to get a handle on the course although the present syllabus writer has taught all the Hebrew classes given at Biblical at one time or another. After the initial offering considerable revision was deemed necessary and we are in the middle of that right now. How the total project will fare is yet to be seen but the idea is to learn about Hebrew so that one can follow discussions in which Hebrew may become a part. We will continue to press for that goal until we have achieved it...or worn one another out in the process. I hate to think of which may come first.

So having said that, we continue.