COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the vocabulary, grammar, and syntax of biblical Aramaic designed to give the students the skills necessary for translation and interpretation of the Aramaic portions of the Bible.

Biblical Aramaic (ARAM 4310) may be taken after completion of HEBR 2312/2322 (or an equivalent one-year elementary Hebrew course) and at least one of the Hebrew reading courses (HEBR 3311 and/or 43xx), or with the instructor’s permission.

Aramaic Grammar I (ARAM 5310) may be taken after completion of HEBR 5301/5302 (or an equivalent one-year elementary Hebrew course) and at least one of the Hebrew reading courses (HEBR 63xx) in the MABL sequence, or with the instructor’s permission.

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name: Phillip Marshall
E-mail: pmarshall@hbu.edu
Office Phone: 281-649-3135
Office Location: Atwood 1, #234
Office Hours: WF 12:00pm-1:00pm; otherwise, we can meet by appointment
Day(s) and Time Course Meets: MWF, 4:00-4:50pm
Day and Time of Final Exam: Wed, December 14, 7:15-9:15pm

LEARNING RESOURCES

Course Text(s):


be downloaded at basicsofbiblicalhebrew.com (click on the tab “Hebrew”; access the Aramaic resources at the bottom of the page).

Supplementary Text(s):


Other Reference Materials:


**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

**Overview/ Purpose of the course**

The instructor will guide students toward achieving a basic grasp of the Biblical Aramaic language. Students will be encouraged to continue their study of Aramaic through course work at HBU and on their own in the future.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able (through class work, quizzes, and written examinations) to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the place of Aramaic among Semitic language families.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the phonetic features of Aramaic and how they compare to and contrast with Biblical Hebrew.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of verbal inflectional and derivational morphology of Biblical Aramaic through proper parsing.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of nominal inflectional and derivational morphology of Biblical Aramaic through proper parsing.
5. Demonstrate an ability to analyze the grammatical structure of Aramaic phrases and sentences.
6. Demonstrate an ability to provide the proper semantic classifications of the grammatical structures encountered in the syntax of Aramaic phrases and sentences.

RELATION TO DEPARTMENTAL GOALS AND PURPOSES
The mission of the Department of Theology is to provide students with a foundation in the classical theological disciplines, facilitate intellectual and spiritual growth, and equip individuals in skills essential to Christian ministry.

Consistent with the purpose and goals of the Department of Theology, this course is a basic introduction to the Aramaic language, which will serve as the foundation for reading original texts in the Judeo-Christian tradition from linguistic, rhetorical, literary, and theological perspectives. The course gives the students opportunity to grow in the Christian faith and to develop in service to community and church.

RELATION TO COLLEGE GOALS AND PURPOSES
The mission of the School of Christian Thought is to serve and equip the Church; to provide students with foundational knowledge in philosophy, theology, and apologetics through reading and engagement with the ideas and languages of classic and biblical texts; to challenge students to display sound reasoning, to communicate clearly, and to demonstrate effective research skills; and to foster both intellectual and spiritual growth as students and faculty alike seek to glorify God in all things.

This course is designed to support the mission of the School of Christian Thought by teaching students how to read ancient Aramaic texts using the best grammatical and linguistic tools.

RELATION TO THE MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY
The mission of Houston Baptist University is to provide a learning experience that instills in students a passion for academic, spiritual, and professional excellence as a result of our central confession, “Jesus Christ is Lord.”

This course seeks to provide an educational atmosphere which fosters academic excellence, freedom of thought, moral and spiritual development of students, and the enrichment of life through the Christian faith and message.

TOPICAL OUTLINE

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ASSSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Course Requirements

1. The student is expected to attend all class meetings, participate in class discussions, take notes on lecture, and meet the requirements of the course as indicated by the professor or instructor, this syllabus, and the assignments given. You are permitted to be absent 3 times without penalty. After that, each absence will result in reducing the final grade by one-fourth of a letter grade.

2. Students will take two major exams this term in which they will demonstrate their knowledge of grammar and their ability to translate Aramaic phrases and sentences. The dates for these examinations are given on the Course Outline.

3. In addition to these major exams, students will demonstrate their knowledge of Biblical Aramaic vocabulary, grammar, and syntax during regular quizzes. To determine the final grade, the instructor will drop the two lowest quiz grades. These opportunities are designed to keep students involved in a regular program of study. (You cannot acquire a second language by “cramming” at the last minute; regular, systematic study is required!) Quizzes on each chapter of MVP will be given as take-home quizzes to be completed by the next class meeting after we have covered the homework for that chapter in class. Make-up quizzes will not be given, since the two lowest quizzes will be dropped anyway.

4. Students will demonstrate their ability to translate Biblical Aramaic sentences and to parse assigned words through the homework exercises. In preparation for each class meeting/period, chapters and exercises from each lesson of MVP are specified. Students must read and study these lessons and complete the exercises for them prior to class. Students will have received an answer key, and prior to the class meeting, they should have checked their work and attempted to understand why they missed any answers. They are to come to the next class prepared to ask questions on the lesson material and any exercise questions that they got wrong and for which they need explanation. The practice exercises for MVP will be turned in on the day that the final exam is given; these are to be completed and corrected to receive full credit. If it is not clear that the student has corrected his/her homework for a given assignment, the student will receive 0% for that assignment.

5. For each section of Daniel/Ezra that we prepare for our classroom “lab,” a student or the professor will be assigned to lead the discussion. The leader must submit a typed two-to-three-page (12 pt font, single spaced) summary sheet containing [1] an English gloss of the assigned passage, [2] guiding questions about the significant syntactical categories encountered and their semantic classifications in his/her assigned passage, with discussion of how the student would answer those questions, and [3] discussion about any interesting forms that either review or explain Aramaic morphology. The summary sheet should be prepared as an outline for discussion of that meeting’s assigned passage. The summary discussion sheet will be collected at the conclusion of each class period and will be assessed for the strength of the English gloss, the grammatical significance of the questions raised, and the student’s demonstration of his/her ability to resolve grammatical questions. NOTE: To help guide the other students’ study of the passage and preparation for the discussion, the leader will post in Blackboard the English gloss of the passage, and a list of the discussion questions at least 24 hours prior to the meeting that he/she will lead.
All students must reference and demonstrate competence in the use of grammars by Rosenthal, Van Pelt, and Johns/Jumper.

6. The students who are not leading a discussion in Daniel/Ezra are responsible to prepare for the passage to be discussed by doing the following: [1] Read the text in Aramaic. [2] Be able to parse all forms; for those forms that you cannot parse by sight, please write down notes on your parsing and helpful aids to memory. Bring these to class completed as the basis for our discussion of the passage. [3] Analyze the syntactic structure of each verse and determine the semantic classifications of the syntactical structures you see in the passage. [4] Analyze the leader’s English gloss and be prepared to submit one question about it. [5] Participate in the discussions!

7. The final grade will be determined according to the following percentages:

   a. Midterm Exam            20%
   b. Final Exam              30%
   c. Quiz Average           20%
   d. Homework Average       20%
   e. Participation/Presentations 10%

Grading Standards

ARAM 4310: The grade scale for the School of Christian Thought’s undergraduate courses is: A (90-100), B (80-89), C (70-79), D (60-69), F (59 and below).

ARAM 5310: The grade scale for the School of Christian Thought’s graduate courses is: A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), F (72 and below)

CREDIT HOUR DEFINITION

Houston Baptist University defines a credit hour as follows:

At least fifteen (15) contact hours, as well as, a minimum of thirty (30) hours of student homework is required for each semester credit hour.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

Language acquisition requires the accumulation of various vocabulary and grammar skills. To assist the student in these tasks, the professor will present aspects of Biblical Aramaic grammar during class and students will practice these skills in class. The professor will also assign practice exercises on a regular basis to be done outside of class, to be corrected using an answer key before the next class meeting, and to be reviewed in class. In addition, with each textbook chapter the professor will assign vocabulary words to memorize to be utilized in translation and grammar exercises. Weekly grammar/vocabulary quizzes based on each textbook chapter will facilitate the acquisition of new words and the application of grammatical concepts.

In order to download all the necessary course handouts (assignments/course outline, syllabus, grammar handouts, answer keys, drill sheets with answer keys) and audio files, students should go to my website: http://BiblicalLanguages.net. There is a link to this website on the homepage of this course in Blackboard.

ATTENDANCE
Regular attendance in class is important for student success, and it is university policy that students must attend class. Absences are recorded beginning from the first class session after the student has enrolled in the course. Any student who does not attend at least 75% of the scheduled class sessions will receive a grade of “F” for the course, regardless of his performance on other assessments such as tests, quizzes, papers, or projects. Professors may apply additional attendance policies as appropriate to individual courses. Likewise, the college or school may also apply additional attendance requirements as necessary. In either case, all applicable attendance policies will be stipulated in the course syllabus.

ABSENCE AND TARDY POLICIES

Please see the catalog currently in use for the University’s policy on classroom absences caused in the course of student representation of the University, such as athletics, chorale, and mock trial activities.

DROPPING A CLASS

Once a student registers for a class, the student will receive a grade for the class unless the drop process is completed through the Registrar's Office. YOU MUST OFFICIALLY WITHDRAW FROM A CLASS if you intend to drop it. This includes students who may have never actually attended class or who may never have completed payment of tuition and fees.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Houston Baptist University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Any student who needs learning accommodations should inform the professor immediately at the beginning of the semester that he/she will be requesting accommodations. In order to request and establish academic accommodations, the student should contact the Coordinator for Learning Disability Services at 504@hbu.edu to schedule an appointment to discuss and request academic accommodation services. Academic Accommodations must be applied for and written each semester. If academic accommodations are approved, a Letter of Accommodations will then be sent to the professor(s). Please refer to the website, www.hbu.edu/504 for all accommodation policies and procedures.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), HBU cannot release personally identifiable information to any person other than the student, unless written permission is given for the University to do so. Students may give permission for their educational records to be released to designated parties by completing the “FERPA Authorization to Release Education Records” in the Registrar’s Office.

In general, no personally identifiable information from a student’s education records will be disclosed without written consent from the student. This includes, but is not limited to, grade reports, academic schedule information, and transcripts. Two exceptions may, however, be made: (1) directory information may be released unless the student requests that it be withheld, as explained in the section below; (2) records may be disclosed to parents of students who depend upon them as defined by Internal Revenue Code 1986, Section 152. HBU has designated the following student information as public or “directory information:” name; local and permanent addresses; telephone numbers; e-mail addresses; date and place of birth; classification; major field(s) of study; classification; dates of attendance; degrees, honors, and awards received; most recent educational institution attended; participation in officially recognized sports and activities; weight and height of athletic team members; and photographs.
At its discretion, the institution may disclose such information for any purpose. Any new or currently enrolled student who does not want his/her directory information disclosed should notify the HBU Registrar in writing by using the FERPA Request to Withhold/Release Directory Information form. Such notification must be received by the end of the first full week of classes for any term to ensure that the student’s directory information is not released except to officials with legitimate educational purposes as authorized by FERPA.

The request to withhold directory information will remain in effect as long as the student continues to be enrolled or until the student files a written request with the HBU Registrar to discontinue the withholding. To continue nondisclosure of directory information after a student ceases to be enrolled, a written request for continuance must be filed with the HBU Registrar during the student’s last term of attendance.

HBU assumes that failure on the part of any student to specifically request the withholding of categories of “directory information” indicates individual approval for disclosure.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Academic integrity is valued at HBU and is at the very heart of the nature of the University as a Christian Liberal Arts Institution. It is the responsibility of all students, faculty, and staff to demonstrate academic integrity. The Academic Integrity policy is designed to promote “the development of moral character, the enrichment of spiritual lives, and the perpetuation of growth in Christian ideals” (HBU Preamble).

Upholding academic integrity provides experience that develops students to act with integrity in all areas of their lives. It is not considered “grace” to allow students to bend rules or act unethically without consequence; to do so violates faculty and staff’s obligation to “train the mind, develop the moral character, and enrich the spiritual lives” (HBU Preamble) of students. However, the University is committed to responding in a redemptive manner, seeking to balance compassion with accountability. Students can expect to be treated with Christian love as they deal with alleged academic integrity matters.

In practice, academic integrity means holding oneself to the highest ethical standard in all academic pursuits – doing all individual work alone, relying on one’s own knowledge during assessments, engaging truthfully with others, following all university policies and procedures, and encouraging this behavior in fellow students and throughout the HBU community.

Academic Dishonesty Defined

Academic integrity is violated when academic dishonesty or misconduct has occurred. As a Christian university, HBU views any act of academic dishonesty as a violation of the University’s fundamental principles. Academic dishonesty occurs when a student:

1. submits the work or record of someone else as his/her own;
2. copies another’s quiz or exam answers, laboratory work, or written assignments (e.g., homework);
3. willfully cooperates with or seeks aid from another student during an academic assessment;
4. has special information for use in an evaluation activity that is not available to other students in the same activity;
5. accesses unauthorized materials during an exam (e.g., cell phone, textbook, prohibited calculators)
6. copies, uses, buys, sells, or otherwise shares any part of an academic assessment (e.g., an exam);
7. works together with other students on assignments that are clearly intended to be individual in nature;
8. prepares assignments (e.g., papers) for another student to turn in as his/her own work;
9. submits work as his/her own when it is not (i.e., plagiarism). This includes quoting or paraphrasing another’s work or ideas without citing and referencing appropriately;
10. submits work for one class that has largely been prepared for and submitted for a grade in another class;
11. falsifies or fabricates data or information;
12. falsifies or fabricates fieldwork documentation (e.g., internship hours).

Other forms of academic misconduct include:

1. destroying, concealing, stealing, or otherwise abusing resource materials (e.g., library books);
2. computer misuse, including illegal use or destruction of computer software or hardware, downloading, emailing, or otherwise accessing unauthorized material (e.g., pornographic content, gambling programs), accessing any computer through a login that belongs to someone else, or otherwise engaging in inappropriate or illegal activity (e.g., hacking, tampering with network, harassment) including the aforementioned using HBU wi-fi;
3. unauthorized copying or distribution of copyrighted materials;
4. engaging in research activities with human subjects without the approval of the Research and Development Committee;
5. classroom misconduct, i.e., any conduct which is disrespectful, harassing, aggressive, or otherwise substantially disrupts the progress of the class in the judgment of the faculty member.

The faculty member is responsible for notifying students in every class at the beginning of each term about the Academic Integrity Policy by including the policy in every course syllabus. Students are responsible for knowing and following the policy in all cases. The faculty member or academic administrative officer is responsible for establishing clearly whether academic dishonesty or misconduct has occurred.

The process is to be redemptive in nature. As directed by the faculty member, the student could correct and resubmit the assignment in question or receive a failing grade for the assignment in question. At the sole discretion of the faculty member, the student may be directed to resubmit the assignment in question or the student may receive a failing grade for the assignment in question. However, failing the course specifically as a result of the alleged violation is not an option (although when the grade for the assignment is calculated with grades for all assignments in the course, the result could be failing the course). In all cases, the faculty member shall report the incident to the dean of the college.

The student may appeal the action by following the process outlined in the Academic Grievance Policy and Process. Once an investigation into an alleged violation of academic integrity has begun, the student may not receive a grade of “W” for the course in which the alleged violation occurred. The student should be aware that suspension from the University or other administrative action may be taken in cases of academic dishonesty or misconduct, including but not limited to a pattern of academic dishonesty or misconduct. A decision to suspend a student is made by the Office of the Provost. Inclusion in the HBU Catalog is considered sufficient notice to all students of University policy and procedures regarding this matter.

ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCESS

A student may file an academic grievance if he or she believes a grade was awarded improperly or for any academic grievance matter. The formal process is described below and must be followed by all parties in order to resolve a dispute.
1. The student should make an appointment with the faculty member in question to discuss the matter in person. The student is advised, but not required, to apprise his or her advisor of the matter. It is appropriate to try to resolve differences amicably and in person if at all possible. This is especially true at a Christian institution. If the student is concerned that a private meeting with the faculty member will create antagonism, the student may skip to Step 2. However, the student must make this concern known in writing to the chair of the department in which the course is located explaining why he or she believes this to be the case.

2. If the student continues to dispute the grade after the face-to-face meeting, the student may bring the matter to the chair of the department. This step requires the student to make a written appeal to the chair and provide a copy to the faculty member and academic advisor. The chair will review the student’s concern and consult with the faculty member, either individually or with both present. The chair will respond to the student and the faculty member in writing of the chair’s recommendation and notify the dean.

3. If the student is unsatisfied with the chair’s recommendation, the student may submit a written request to the dean of the college in which the department resides. The dean will review the written appeal and consult with the chair, the faculty member, the advisor and the student. This will occur either individually or in a group as the dean deems appropriate. The student may request a Standards Committee be formed by the dean. The purpose of the Committee is to bring clarity to all sides, allowing for a thoughtful and informed response from the disputants and to assure integrity in the assigning of grades to students by faculty. However, the Committee has no authority to force the change of a grade. The membership of the committee is composed of all parties heretofore mentioned with the dean serving as chair of the Committee. The dean will also select at least one faculty member from the college and one faculty member from another college to serve on the Committee. The student making the complaint should be the only student involved and no legal representation nor any other parties are permitted. After hearing both sides and deliberating the Committee will render a judgment as to what it advises should be done. The hearing and the rendering is the end of the process. No appeals to change a grade are to be made to the Provost or the President.

4. If the student believes that the process or the way in which they were treated was unfair, the student may submit a written appeal to the Provost. The Provost will make a judgment whether or not to accept the appeal (the President is not to be contacted in these matters). If the Provost agrees to hear the matter, only two allegations will be considered: 1) that the process itself is unfair; 2) that the student was not treated fairly in the process. The burden will be on the student to demonstrate with facts and evidence that the process or the treatment was unfair. Depending on the Provost’s findings, the matter may be returned to the Standards Committee for further review.

5. A student is permitted to ask the University Ombudsman to serve as an advisor throughout this process; however, the student must make this known to all parties involved in the academic grievance process. At no time should any HBU employee advise a student anonymously or write an appeal document.

6. If a student questions any grade as recorded in the Registrar’s Office, the student has a period of one (1) year beginning with the end of the term in which the grade was awarded, or six (6) months after the degree is conferred (whichever comes sooner), to challenge the accuracy of the grade.

PLAGIARISM SOFTWARE
Note that the University utilizes "Turn-It-In" and other programs to investigate possible plagiarism activities. Turnitin is now integrated within Blackboard and a class ID and a password is no longer needed.

All major papers for this course will be submitted to the plagiarism prevention software, Turnitin through their blackboard course on or before a paper's due date. No paper will be graded without meeting this requirement beforehand. A separate handout will be provided to give detailed instructions on this process.

In accordance with FERPA, and to best protect the students’ privacy, no personal identification (e.g., name, social security number, H number) should be uploaded with the text of student papers. Student names for submission are ignored and not added to the database submissions. This information is used only to assist the faculty member with grading papers for the appropriate student.

CHILDREN IN CLASSROOMS

In almost all instances, children are not allowed in the classroom nor are they allowed to be on campus unattended. Class sessions are for enrolled students only unless other arrangements are approved by the instructor in advance. For safety reasons, children are prohibited from all laboratories.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

The classroom environment is to be conducive to learning and is under the authority of the instructor. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from the time spent in class, students are expected to demonstrate civil behavior in the classroom and show appropriate respect for the instructor and other students. Inappropriate behavior toward the instructor, in or out of the classroom, may result in a directive to the offending student to leave the classroom or the course entirely.

Classroom behaviors that disturb the teaching-learning experiences include the following behaviors: activated cellular phone or other device, demands for special treatment, frequent episodes of leaving and then returning to the class, excessive tardiness, leaving class early, making offensive remarks or disrespectful comments or gestures to the instructor or other students, missing deadlines, prolonged chattering, sleeping, arriving late to class, dominating discussions, shuffling backpacks or notebooks, disruption of group work, and overt inattentiveness. It is at the discretion of the instructor as to whether laptops will be allowed for use in the classroom.

HBU NAVIGATE

To ensure that every student takes full advantage of the educational and learning opportunities, HBU has implemented HBU Navigate, a program that gives students and instructors the resources they need to track student progress. Your professor may issue you a kudos such as “Strong Class Participation” or “Outstanding Academic Performance” and may also issue a flag in HBU Navigate if he or she believes you are struggling in their course. You should meet with you advisor and professor to discuss new strategies for successful completion of the course, and follow any recommendations you receive in the flag email.

EMAIL POLICY

All University and class email communication will be sent to your HBU email account. You are responsible for checking this frequently. If you choose, you may reroute your HBU email to another email address. Your emails should be in a professional format with correct spelling, capitalization, and grammar.
INCOMPLETE COURSE REQUEST

Only the dean of the college or school may grant incompletes and only to students who have a major documented emergency in the last few days of a semester. Students with excessive absences, which will result in failing the course, will not be allowed to take the final exam nor be eligible to receive an incomplete.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Review the Academic Calendar here.

LATE WORK & TEST POLICY

Late work will be penalized. You should not miss any exams. If you are sick, you need to notify the professor in advance. The professor reserves the right to administer a different exam, deduct points for taking the exam late, and/or schedule the makeup for a later date. Missing an exam without giving prior notice will result in a zero for that test, with no makeup.

STUDENT EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTOR

Students will complete faculty appraisal forms as regularly administered by the University.

Student Signature – I have read and understand the syllabus for this class. I understand that the content of this syllabus and the topical outline are subject to change at the discretion of the professor. I have read and understand the HBU Classroom Policy posted on Black Board. **I promise to uphold the Academic Integrity Policy at Houston Baptist University and will not tolerate its violation by others.**