



**Faculty Contact** Updated September 3, 2022 (see end for details)

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Please contact me anytime you have comments, suggestions, questions or you would like to talk about this course or your overall learning and ministry goals.

## **Course Description**

God chose Hebrew as the language of His first revelation of His works, promises and first covenants with His people. God's choice of Hebrew and some Aramaic for His First Covenant Scriptures is highly appropriate for their content and His eternal purposes as is Greek for the New Covenant scriptures (בְּרִית הַדָּוִד, *bə-rîṭ ḥă-dā-šāh* Jeremiah 31:31; καινή διαθήκη, *kainē diathēkē*, Luke 22:20). This course is part 1 of the introduction to the hearing, speaking, reading and understanding of the spiritually rich Hebrew language of God's First Covenant Scriptures.

## **Course Objectives**

### **Bible**

1. Know God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and *hear His voice* in the language He first spoke to men and women and which records His speaking the universe into existence.
2. Increase our faith in God and the truth, power, beauty, wonder, accuracy and detail of His living, abiding, inspired Word.
3. Enjoy Hebrew at every stage of our learning which is a rewarding life-long experience in seeing how appropriate and effective it is for God's eternal purposes and as a foundation for everything He accomplishes through Jesus' coming into His world and giving us His New Covenant.
4. Experience the thought world, thought process and flow of individual thought units of God's inspired writers in the close hearing, speaking and reading of their Hebrew texts.
5. Increase our awareness of the power of God's literary brilliance and features of Hebrew Scripture and their important implications in exegesis, interpretation, preaching, teaching, evangelism, apologetics and the growth and flourishing of our relationship with God.

### **Bible & Ministry**

6. Prepare provisional and refined translations for exegesis, interpretation and preparation of sermons, Bible lessons, worship, evangelism, apologetics, etc.

7. Enhance our devotion to God in daily living and practical ministry.
8. Answer questions from seekers and members of the body of Christ.
9. Use our understanding of the Hebrew text in expressing the essence in English to those whom we serve.
10. Along with 5 and 6 above, apply our learning in the growth and flourishing of our relationship with God and His people.

## **Worldview**

11. Enhance our Biblical worldviews by better understanding God's revelations of Himself, His eternal purposes, His works, and His world through Hebrew Scripture, articulating answers to these twelve questions:
  1. Who is God?
  2. What is the nature of external reality, the world around us? (i.e. real or an illusion)
  3. What is a human being?
  4. Where do we come from?
  5. What happens to a person at death?
  6. Why is it possible to know anything at all?
  7. How do we know what is right and wrong?
  8. What is the meaning of human history?
  9. How do we perceive time? (i.e. linear, circular cycles, etc.)
  10. Is the worldview/culture open or closed?
  11. Is the centre of this worldview/culture its groups or individuals?
  12. Where are we going, how does the world end?
12. Increase our understanding of Israel as God's First Covenant people, their Biblical history and their present language and culture.

## **Language Learning**

God designed us to learn language through a sequential process of stages from infancy to adulthood: listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar acquisition. Interestingly, throughout history and even today, many people lead productive and rewarding lives only speaking their native language without being able to read or write.

## **Native Speakers**

Native language speakers take about 15 to 25 years to learn and master their mother tongues in many stages:

**Listening** Children spend about 1.5 to 2.5 years, sometimes more, listening to their native language before speaking it. During this time children gradually learn to associate sounds with people, objects and events and may use signs (e.g. pointing) and vocal exclamations to communicate.

**Speaking** From ages 2 to 5 children continue to listen and learn to speak while expanding their vocabulary and ability to express themselves. Association and imitation through interaction with parents and others are important dimensions of language learning. Interestingly, children may learn the alphabet at about 2 years of age, about 3 to 4 years before they learn to spell. Daily speaking of a language begins and continues without attention to how we spell words. How often have you asked or heard someone ask of a commonly spoken word, “How do you spell...?”

**Reading** Children begin to read at about 5 to 7 years. Reading acuity and vocabulary building can take another 10 to 15 years and continues throughout life. Interestingly, reading earlier at younger ages apparently does not necessarily improve life-long acuity.

**Writing** Writing follows the development of reading skills. Learning to write well and express deep abstract and spiritual thoughts takes many years and continues throughout life. Many vocations and lifestyles involve extensive writing skills while others require little to none.

**Grammar** The general and minute details of grammar usually come with reading and writing. For most people, grammar knowledge may remain basic not requiring consideration on a daily basis. For those studying the meaning of Biblical texts and doing technical writing grammar is fundamental and enlightening.

## **Traditional Biblical Languages Learning**

Most traditional learning of Biblical languages is done only partially in reverse order to the way God designed our brains to learn languages summarized in the stages above. The traditional method focuses on grammar and reading/decoding/translating and some writing without much attention to listening, thinking and speaking in the languages. Many people have advanced degrees in Hebrew and Greek without the ability to formulate thoughts and speech, to ask for a glass of water in Israel or Greece. This is how I first learned Biblical languages. It is somewhat like learning about the 30,000 parts of a car without seeing a car or learning to drive.

Research shows that language uptake is greatly enhanced by following methods akin to the way native speakers learn.

## **Method of This Course**

Ideally, this course would take 15 to 25 years full-time. We would spend 2 years listening to elementary Hebrew and associating sounds with God, people, objects, places and events. Then we would spend 3 years learning to speak very basic Hebrew with one another. We would then spend 5 years learning to read and write elementary Hebrew while continuing to

build our vocabulary and skills of spoken expression. In the 10th year of our course we would begin to learn elementary grammar. Finally, we would take about 10 years to acquire mature reading, writing and grammar skills while speaking only Hebrew to one another that would in turn form the foundation of our life-long pursuit of knowing God and His Word which is what serious Jewish students of God's Word do.

Since we only have 1 ⅓ years limited part-time together for all 4 terms, we will do our best to follow an abbreviated form of God's way of language learning:

- We will begin by listening to Hebrew spoken by a native Hebrew speaker.
- We will associate the sounds of Hebrew words and verses we hear with the realities of person, thought, objects and events they represent, notably God, His works, promises, covenants, etc.
- We will practice speaking the words and verses we hear.
- We will learn some basic words, phrases and sentences we can use in very basic dialogue.
- As we begin listening early we will begin reading early.
- As we go, we will learn fundamentals of grammar first in relation to what we are hearing and then in general as they inform Scripture.
- We will notice and try to keep in mind that most of the written grammatical details of the Masoretic pointed text have to do with the sounds of spoken Hebrew and how they form thought units, the fundamental building blocks of Hebrew Scripture.
  - Native readers of Scripture and native modern Hebrew speakers don't use pointing. The consonantal text is enough.
  - We will see how familiarity with the language enables one to speak basic Hebrew words and sentences without thinking about letters or spelling.
- Though this is a foundational introductory course the basic Hebrew we learn will greatly enrich our understanding of God and His Word and how they inspire us, build our faith and guide our lives of service and prove useful in preaching, teaching, etc.

## **Primary Source Text and Resources**

**Hebrew Bible, *Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia***

Thorium audio reader available at:

<https://www.edrlab.org/software/thorium-reader/>

\* Please download Thorium to your computer.

Audio Bible books for Thorium available at:

<https://ebible.org/multimedia/hbo/>

\* Download Genesis and Deuteronomy "Slowly Spoken" versions and any other Hebrew Bible books of interest to you and with which you are already very familiar in English.

## **Secondary Resources**

### **Required:**

Bartlet, Andrew and Andrew E. Steinmann. *Fundamental Biblical Hebrew and Fundamental Biblical Aramaic*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2004.

### **Suggested:**

Van Pelt, Miles V. and Gary D. Pratico. *Charts of Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007.

———. *The Vocabulary Guide to Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2019.

Please see Bibliography for other helpful resources.

## **Credit Work**

- Genesis 1:1–15 Verse of the Week 15%
- Brief Vocabulary and Grammar Quizzes 30%
- Exercises (Drills) 15%
- Workbook of Observations and Resources 15%
- Research Paper: A Brief History of Hebrew:  
the Original Consonantal Text,  
the Masoretic Text, \*Holiness Period, Mystical  
Perspectives and the Revival of Hebrew  
as a Contemporary Living Language 25%

\* *Lashon Ha-qodesh* לשון הקדוש (Language of Holy Matters)

### **Genesis 1:1–15 Verse of the Week 15%**

You will find our verse of the week in the schedule below. We will listen to it together spoken by a native Hebrew speaker in the first part of our class and make some interesting observations about its sounds, meaning, pronunciation, vocabulary and other features. Listening to a native Hebrew speaker is important because even second language learners who can recite or speak the language well will usually have remnants of their mother tongue accent.

Listen closely to the native speaker's pronunciation of the verse of the week several times during the week using the Thorium reader or online site as you wish. It often helps to listen to a word or phrase several times slowly to catch the nuances of sound in pronunciation. If you can, memorize the verse from your hearing of it and speak it in the first part of our next class.

I realize some people have difficulty memorizing. So, if you do, practice reading your verse aloud so that you are pronouncing it as closely to the native speaker as possible for our class. By the end of lesson 2 you will know enough about the consonants and vowels to read your verse of the week. We will be learning about accents throughout the course and you should be able to get a sense of Hebrew accents, end stress, etc. from hearing our native Hebrew speaker pronounce all the words in every verse.

**Brief Vocabulary and Grammar Quizzes** 30%

A brief weekly online quiz reviewing our vocabulary and selected features of grammar from each lesson.

Complete the quiz on Populi by 11:59 p.m. the day before the next lesson.

Due to the limitations of the pandemic and online learning, please complete the quiz on the honour system. God is your proctor.

**Exercises (Drills)** 15%

Complete the exercises of each chapter as they occur in our schedule.

You may complete your exercises in your hardcopy or digital copy of your textbook and/or on separate paper as appropriate (e.g. practicing your consonant and vowel writing in lesson 1).

Affirm on Populi you have completed your exercises by 11:59 p.m. the day before the next lesson.

Due to the challenges of scanning and uploading, you don't have to submit your exercises.

**Workbook of Observations and Resources** 15%

Keep a workbook of notes, observations of interest and helpful resources you accumulate over the 15 weeks of our course.

Submit your notebook by 11:59 p.m. on the day before lesson 14.

**Research Paper: A Brief History of Hebrew:  
the Original Consonantal Text,  
the Masoretic Text, \*Holiness Period, Mystical**

**Perspectives and the Revival of Hebrew  
as a Contemporary Living Language** 25%

\* *Lashon Ha-qodesh* לשון הקודש (Language of Holy Matters)

Eight to 10 pages of content, not including title page, bibliography or appendices.

SBL form.

While we could have lectures on the very interesting and important history of Hebrew, you will find doing the research and expressing your findings yourself most rewarding.

Submit your research paper by 11:59 p.m. on the day before lesson 14.

## **Schedule**

### **Weekly for Lessons 1 to 15**

- Hebrew you may know: familiar names, places, actions, etc.
- Useful terms, phrases, greetings, etc. in dialogue.

### **Weekly for Lessons 2 to 15**

- Genesis 1:1–15 verse of the week, listening, speaking, observing
- Review previous lesson
- Brief vocabulary and grammar quiz online (see credit work above)
- Exercises (Drills)

### **Lesson 1**

- Genesis 1:1 listening, observations, vocabulary
- Textbook chapter 1, pages 3–7a, 9b
  - Spelling
    - 1 Aleph-Bet (Alphabet)
      - Consonants
    - 2 Vowels
  - Exercises
    - Drill 1 A–C Introduction

### **Lesson 2**

- Genesis 1:1 speaking
- Genesis 1:2 listening, observations, vocabulary
- Textbook chapter 1, pages 7b–14
  - Spelling (continued)
    - 3 Spelling

- Vocabulary
  - Memory methods (supplement to text)
- Summary
- Exercises
  - Drills 2–3 Introduction
- Deuteronomy 5:1 listening, speaking and reading

### **Lesson 3**

- Genesis 1:2 speaking
- Genesis 1:3 listening, observations, vocabulary
- Textbook chapter 2, pages 15–20
  - Noun Morphology, Gender and Number
    - 1 Basic Morphology
    - 2 Spelling Changes: Vowel Reduction
  - Vocabulary
  - Summary
  - Exercises
    - Drills A, B and C Introduction
- Deuteronomy 5:1 listening, speaking and reading,
  - identifying singular and plural nouns

### **Lesson 4**

- Genesis 1:3 speaking
- Genesis 1:4 listening, observations, vocabulary
- Textbook chapter 3, pages 21–30
  - Prefixes
    - 1 The Definite Article
    - 2 Prepositions
      - Independent
      - Proclitic (semi-detached)
      - Prefixed
    - 3 The *Waw* Conjunction
    - 4 Nominal (Verbless) Sentences
  - Vocabulary
  - Summary
  - Exercises
    - Drills A–E Introduction
    - Translation of Sentences
- Deuteronomy 5:1 listening, speaking and reading,
  - identifying the definite article, prepositions and uses of the conjunction

### **Lesson 5**

- Genesis 1:4 speaking
- Genesis 1:5 listening, observations, vocabulary
  - Numbers
  - Your phone number
- Textbook chapter 4, pages 31–38
  - Verb Morphology: The Perfect Aspect (Afformative Verb Forms ≈ Suffix)
    - 1 Introduction to Verb Morphology
    - 2 The Perfect Aspect
    - 3 The Direct Object Marker
    - 4 Negation of Finite Verbs
    - 5 Word Order in Finite Sentences
  - Vocabulary
  - Summary
  - Exercises
    - Drills A–C
    - Translation of Sentences
- Deuteronomy 5:1 listening, speaking and reading,
  - identifying verb forms
  - analyse the two main verbs in the final line

## Lesson 6

- Genesis 1:5 speaking
- Genesis 1:6 listening, observations, vocabulary
- Textbook chapter 5, pages 39–46
  - Verb Morphology: Variations of the Perfect Aspect
    - 1 Introduction to Irregular Verbs
    - 2 Minor Variations of the Perfect Form
    - 3 Major Variations of the Perfect Forms: Two Consonant Roots
    - 4 Stative Verbs (State / Condition of the Subject)
  - Vocabulary
  - Summary
  - Exercises
    - Drills A–B
    - Translation of Sentences

## Lesson 7

- Genesis 1:6 speaking
- Genesis 1:7 listening, observations, vocabulary
- Textbook chapter 6, pages are 47–53
  - Verb Morphology: The Imperfect Aspect (Preformative Verb Forms ≈ Prefix + Suffix)
    - 1 The Imperfect Aspect

- 2 Minor Variations of the Imperfect Forms: Guttural Verbs
- Vocabulary
- Note on the Divine Name YHWH
- Summary
- Exercises
  - Drills A–C
  - Translation of Sentences

## Lesson 8

- Genesis 1:7 speaking
- Genesis 1:8 listening, observations, vocabulary
- Textbook chapter 7, pages 54–60
  - Verb Morphology: Major Variations of the Imperfect Aspect
    - 1 I-*Nun* and I-*Yod* Verbs
    - 2 Two-Consonant Roots: Hollow and III-*He*
  - Vocabulary
  - Summary
  - Exercises
    - Drills A–B
    - Translation of Sentences

## Lesson 9

- Genesis 1:8 speaking
- Genesis 1:9 listening, observations, vocabulary
- Textbook chapter 8, pages 61–64, 68
  - *Waw* Consecutive
    - 1 Imperfect *Waw* Consecutive (Preterite, “completed in the past”)
  - Vocabulary

## Lesson 10

- Genesis 1:9 speaking
- Genesis 1:10 listening, observations, vocabulary
- Textbook chapter 8, pages 64–71
  - *Waw* Consecutive (continued)
    - 2 Perfect *Waw* Consecutive
    - 3 Major Coordinate Sequences
    - 4 Summary of Verbal Aspects
  - Exercises
    - Drills A–B
    - Translation of Sentences

## Lesson 11

- Genesis 1:10 speaking
- Genesis 1:11 listening, observations, vocabulary
  
- Textbook chapter 9, pages 72–80
  - Noun Morphology: Absolute and Construct States
    - 1 The Two States of Nouns
    - 2 The Forms of Nouns in Construct State
    - Construct States: Special Problems
  - Vocabulary
  - Summary
  - Exercises
    - Drills A–D
    - Translation of Sentences

## Lesson 12

- Genesis 1:11 speaking
- Genesis 1:12 listening, observations, vocabulary
  
- Textbook chapter 10, pages 81–83, 90b, 91a, 92
  - Personal Pronouns and Pronominal Suffixes
    - 1 Independent Personal Pronouns
    - 2 Pronominal Suffixes
      - A–B
  - Vocabulary
  - Summary Part I and II A–B
  - Exercises
    - Drill 1

## Lesson 13

- Genesis 1:12 speaking
- Genesis 1:13 listening, observations, vocabulary
  
- Textbook chapter 10, pages 84–90a, 91, 93–95
  - Personal Pronouns and Pronominal Suffixes (continued)
    - 2 Pronominal Suffixes (continued)
      - C
    - 3 Pronominal Suffixes: Special Problems
  - Summary Review I, II, III
  - Exercises
    - Drills 2–3
    - Translation of Sentences

## Lesson 14

- Genesis 1:13 speaking
- Genesis 1:14 listening, observations, vocabulary
  
- Textbook chapter 11, pages 96–105
  - Adjectives
    - 1 The Form of Adjectives
    - 2 The Function of Adjectives
    - 3 Comparative / Superlative of Adjectives
    - 4 Demonstrative Adjectives (“This” and “That”)
  - Vocabulary
  - Summary
  - Exercises
    - Drill 1–2
    - Translation of Sentences

## Lesson 15

- Genesis 1:14 speaking
- Genesis 1:15 listening, observations, vocabulary
  
- Textbook chapter 12, pages
  - Participles and Relative Clauses
    - 1 The Participle
    - 2 The Function of Participles
    - 3 Relative Clauses: The Relative Pronoun **אֲשֶׁר** (who, whom, which, that...)
  - Vocabulary
  - Exercises
    - Drills 1–2
    - Translation of Sentences

## Bibliography

### Introductions / Introductory Grammars

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Lambdin, Thomas O. *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971.

Seow, C. L. (Choon-Leong). *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*. Revised edition. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1995.

Green, J. S., G. B. Lester and J. F. Scrivner. *Handbook to a Grammar For Biblical Hebrew*. Revised edition. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2005.

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———. *The Vocabulary Guide to Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2019.

Weingreen, J. *A Practical Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*. Second edition. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1963.  
Available in your online files folder on Populi.

## **Lexicons, Dictionaries and Analytical Tools**

Botterweck, G. Johannes et al. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Seventeen volumes. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974-2021.  
GLBC Library 221.3 BOT v. 1... REF (aka TDOT)

Brown, Francis, Samuel Rolles Driver and Charles Augustus Briggs. *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon with an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic: Coded with Strong's Concordance Numbers*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005. (aka BDB)  
Available digitally with Bible programs and [biblehub.org](http://biblehub.org) interlinear.

Clines, David J. A., ed. *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Nine volumes. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993–2016.

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Gesenius, Heinrich Friedrich Wilhelm. *Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures: Numerically Coded to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, with an English Index of More Than 12,000 Entries*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1990.  
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<https://www.blueletterbible.org/study/lexica/gesenius/index.cfm>

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Holladay, William L. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971.

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Koehler, Ludwig, and Walter Baumgartner. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Five volumes. Revised by Walter Baumgartner and Johann Jakob Stamm. Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. Leiden, NL: Brill, 1994–2000. (aka HALOT)  
Guide for use available at: <http://hebrewbiblescholar.com/halot/>

Landes, George M. *Building Your Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary: Learning Words by Frequency and Cognate*. SBL Resources for Biblical Study 41. Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2001.

Owens, John Joseph. *Analytical Key to the Old Testament*. Four volumes. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989–1990.

Van Gemeren, Willem. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. Five volumes. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997.

Annotated list of some of the above available at  
<https://hst.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/HEBREW-LANGUAGE-TOOLS.pdf>

## **Intermediate and Advanced Grammars**

Ben Zvi, Ehud and Maxine Hancock. *Readings in Biblical Hebrew: An Intermediate Textbook*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993.

- Chisholm, Robert B. *A Workbook for Intermediate Hebrew: Grammar, Exegesis, and Commentary on Jonah and Ruth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2016.
- Cook, John and Robert D. Holmstedt. *Intermediate Biblical Hebrew: An Illustrated Grammar*. Illustrated by Philip Williams. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020.
- Fuller, Russell. *Invitation to Biblical Hebrew Syntax: An Intermediate Grammar*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2017.
- Genesius, Heinrich Friedrich Wilhelm. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. Edited and enlarged by E. Kautzsch. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2006.  
Other editions available on Kindle economically and at  
[http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Gesenius%27\\_Hebrew\\_Grammar](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Gesenius%27_Hebrew_Grammar)  
<http://archive.org/details/geseniushebrewgr00geseuoft>  
Guide for use available at: <http://hebrewbiblescholar.com/gesenius/>
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- Steinmann, Andrew E. *Intermediate Biblical Hebrew: A Reference Grammar with Charts and Exercises*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2009.
- van der Merwe, Christo H., Jacobus A. Naudé and Jan H. Kroeze. *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*. Second Edition. London, UK: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017.
- Walk O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, 1990. Imprint of Penn State University Press.  
(aka Waltke-O'Connor and IBHS)  
Guide for use available at: <http://hebrewbiblescholar.com/waltke-oconnor/>

## **Modern Hebrew Elementary Readers**

Second language learners find elementary readers can be helpful. These are examples.

*Alefbet: Look, Listen and Read: Part 1, Letters*. Jersey City, NJ: Ktav Publishing House, 2005.

Persky, Elias and Sol Scharfstein. *Language: Gate of Reading*. N.p. Ktav Publishing House, 1977.

Scharfstein, Sol. *Family*. Hoboken, NJ: Ktav Publishing House, 1992.

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## Modern Hebrew

Eytan, Halon. "The Israeli Academy Continuing the Unprecedented Revival of the Hebrew Language" *The Jerusalem Post* (February 17, 2018). Available at: <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/culture/the-israeli-academy-continuing-the-unprecedented-revival-of-the-hebrew-language-542822>

Hoffman, Joel M. *In the Beginning: A Short History of the Hebrew Language*. New York, NY: New York University Press, 2004.  
Chapter 10 on Modern Hebrew and the work of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda is interesting and helpful for your research paper section on modern Hebrew.

## Updates

September 3, 2022

\* Introduction to numbers added to week 5 where we meet our first Hebrew number in Genesis 1:5.

\* Research Paper title and subtitle *Lashon Ha-qodesh* לשון הקדוש.