



BL 512 Introduction to Hebrew Exegesis (3)
Winter 2014
Instructor: R. R. Remin

Contacting the Instructor

Office: L2081

Class Times: Monday 6:30-9:30 p.m.

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Class Location: L2100

Course Description

In this course the student reads selected portions of prose and poetry from the Hebrew Old Testament. The grammatical structures learned in the first semester are reviewed. New structures are learned. The basic principles of the exegesis of a Hebrew text are studied. *Prerequisite BL 511*

Course Objectives

Primary Objectives

1. Each student will continue to advance their knowledge of Hebrew grammar so as to improve their ability to interpret the Hebrew Old Testament faithfully. The emphasis falls on how understanding Hebrew improves ones ability to understand the Old Testament. To this end the student will add to their knowledge of how the Hebrew language works by:
 - Learning **grammar** (the characteristics of derived stems of the strong and weak verbs in the perfect, imperfect, and their participles, imperatives, and infinitives),
 - **Reading** portions of the Hebrew OT for discussion and translation in class,
 - Learning primarily at recognition level Hebrew **vocabulary** of the Old Testament as it occurs in the chapters of the text book. Emphasis is placed on words which occur over one hundred times and/or are theologically significant.
2. Each student will learn an exegetical method which will assist them in their movement from a text to a sermon/lesson.
 - Learn how to and practice carrying out **contextual**, **verbal** (word study), and **syntactical** analyses of selected OT texts,

- Each student will learn (through lecture, illustration from OT texts read in class and completed assignments) how to follow through on their study of any given text with **theological** and **homiletical** analyses (or lesson plan) which will make the text's message relevant to a twenty first century audience and deliverable in an effective manner,
 - Learning the genres and sub-genres of the literature of the OT, their characteristics and their purposes and how to interpret texts consistently with their genre,
 - Learn how to do studies of Hebrew words and/or concepts in a meaningful and accurate manner and use this knowledge in the analyses above.
 - Learn the characteristics of Hebrew poetry and how to use these characteristics to better understand the meaning of the text,
 - Learn the strengths and weaknesses of some of the reference works (lexica, grammars, theological wordbooks, commentaries, translations, software) which are available to students.
 - Learn basic principles of textual criticism and how to read a critical apparatus as we read portions of the Hebrew OT. Learn the difference between different translations due to textual variants and those due to translation *per se*, and use this knowledge in a contextual and verbal analysis of a short Hebrew text.
3. Each student will learn to interpret OT texts with a hermeneutic which places highest value on contextual, verbal and syntactical reading of the text but which is also theologically informed. This hermeneutic is "literal" in the sense used by the Reformers in that the text is read and interpreted in the manner of all written human communication with attention to the grammar of language, figures of speech, genre, *etc.* Each student will be required to begin to articulate the hermeneutic by which they will interpret the Old Testament.
 4. Each student will be repeatedly challenged to strive for interpretation and theological reflection which is relevant to those whom they will serve. Students will also be exposed to other theological and hermeneutical systems. Each student will learn and hopefully come to own the tradition of importance of Scripture correctly exegeted from the original languages which is part of our evangelical Protestant heritage as distinct from some other Christian traditions.
 5. Since attitudes are more often caught than taught, it is hoped that through interaction in class and by the example of the instructor in this course student will enthusiastically and realistically desire to interpret the Hebrew OT faithfully and effectively.

Secondary Objectives

Although the following objectives are not the primary objectives of this course, they are objectives which relate to the learning outcomes which Ambrose Seminary desires to accomplish in the lives of our graduates and to which your instructor is wholeheartedly committed and thus will be addressed in an informal manner at several points in this course.

6. Each student accept that the learning of Hebrew for the purpose of faithfully interpreting the Hebrew OT is not accomplished in a few seminary courses but rather through the practice of life long learning and a life long commitment to studying the OT in its original languages.
7. Each student will begin to reflect on how the authors of the OT communicated effectively by using language and especially genre “for all it was worth” in diverse contexts and the implications for effective communication in the twenty first century.
8. The nature of this course usually challenges students at the point of integration of the personal, theological and ministerial dimensions of their lives. This is expected and provides students with an opportunity to attempt such integration in a relatively safe environment.
9. Whereas the exegesis of the Hebrew OT is something of a skill and an art. Each student can improve their skills but not all are equally gifted. Again the nature of this course provides an opportunity for each student to begin to identify their God-given gifts and abilities.
10. Our evangelical Protestant tradition places a very high value on the faithful exegesis of Scripture and each student is expected to come to a better understanding and appropriation of the implications of this value system for our tradition.
11. Because of the instructor’s particular interest and knowledge of the Ancient Near East and the Jewish cultural milieu in which the documents Hebrew OT were received and the differences within that setting as well as my particular interest in the diversity within the OT tradition, each student will learn something of OT authors communicated, served and lead Israel effectively in a variety of settings in a world characterized by diversity.

Required Texts

These texts were required in the previous semester and again this semester.

W.S. LaSor, *Handbook of Biblical Hebrew, an Inductive Approach Based on the Hebrew Text of Esther*, 2 Vol. (W.B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1978).

Brown, Francis, Driver, S.R., Briggs, Charles A. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Clarendon Press, 1907).

Ethelyn Simon, Irene Resnikoff, Linda Motzkin and Susan Noss. *Tall Tales Told in Biblical Hebrew* (EKS Publishing Co., Oakland, CA, 1994).

Invest in one of the three best programs for doing Hebrew exegesis:

Bibloi 8.0 -- <http://www.silvermnt.com/bibloi.htm> This is the one used in class.

Logos Bible Software -- <http://www.logos.com/> An associated name is Libronix.

Accordance Bible Soft. -- <http://www.accordancebible.com/> MAC platform originally, but now also available in a pc format.

Course Schedule

This class meets Monday evenings from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. except for the following days:

- February 17 – Alberta’s Family Day
- April 14 – no class because the last day of lectures was April 10

April 7th is the last class.

The course requirements have these due dates:

- February 24 -- Contextual Analysis
- March 10 – Midterm test
- March 17 -- Verbal Analysis
- March 31 -- Syntactical Analysis
- April 7 -- Theological and Homiletical Analyses

Absolute deadline for late assignments is April 19 which is the last day of the examination period; for graduating students the absolute deadline is one week before.

Other dates for which you don't want to be late:

- January 19 (Sunday) is the last day to add/drop a course without financial penalty.
- February 25 is the deadline for applying for scholarships (\$\$\$\$) and other financial assistance (\$\$\$\$) for returning students. Please apply for money (\$\$\$\$)! The applications are available on January 29.
- March 21 is the last day to withdraw from the course and receive a W (withdraw) for a grade.
- March 31 is the last day to apply for an extension on course work beyond April 10 is the last day of lectures for this semester.
- April 19 is the end of the semester.

These dates are reproduced here for your convenience, and will never take precedence over those published in the academic calendars.

Course Requirements

1. Prepare assignments in the textbook, the reader and/or readings of the Hebrew OT as directed before the class in which they are discussed. Participate in the discussion in class.
2. Complete four analyses (contextual, verbal, syntactical, and theological/homiletical) on a selected text and as directed. A detailed instruction sheet for each of these analyses accompanies this syllabus. Each of these analyses will be submitted in this format:
 - There will be no title page.
 - The pages are bound with no more and no less than a single staple in the upper left corner.
 - There will be no cover page. In the upper left corner of the first page, include the following information in this order. This information is single spaced.
 - i. On the first line, the name of the assignment and the text. E.g. Contextual Analysis, Isaiah 40.1-6.
 - ii. On the second line the words, Introduction to Hebrew Exegesis.
 - iii. On the third line the student's complete name which is the same as the name under which you are registered in this course. The name is followed by the student number.
 - iv. On the fourth line the words, "Ambrose Seminary" must appear.
 - v. On the fifth line the date on which the assignment was submitted.
 - The remainder of the paper is double spaced in 12 point font of a common type; the format is that appropriate to an academic paper with footnotes and bibliography. No extra colours or special fonts except for

Greek and/or Hebrew are to appear in the paper. The bibliography is single spaced in proper academic format.

- You know Hebrew. You have to use Hebrew letters for Hebrew words. Transliteration is unacceptable except in the title of an entry in your footnotes and/or bibliography or a direct quotation. Beware! Not all printers will print all fonts correctly. This is your responsibility to ensure all fonts are printed correctly in you papers. Do not italicize the Hebrew because it is in a foreign font. Remember you are not doing transliteration. Do not underline the Hebrew for the same reason! Do not put the Hebrew in quotation marks! The distinctive font is the “tip off” that it’s a foreign word.
 - Each analysis is as long as it needs to be to do the analysis responsibly. The last page contains the bibliography.
 - The presentation of the ideas in your papers must be consistent with these standards. Each student is expected to do research and then state the ideas derived from that research in their own words in their papers. There will be no direct quotations at all in the body of your paper. At no point will an idea be introduced with a perfunctory phrase such as “Nemo F. Scholar says.” If a student errs, and a student does include material taken *verbatim* from a source, and since you have been told there will be no direct quotations or quotation marks, this constitutes a failure to follow instructions and will incur appropriate penalties. The grade for the assignment will be F.
3. Write the closed book mid-term examination in class. This is a test of a student’s ability to identify the characteristics of the derived stems of strong and weak verbs. The test is closed book. (The redundancy is for emphasis.)
 4. Complete an initial statement of your hermeneutic for the OT with special attention to your use of Hebrew. Specific detailed instructions will be provided. This assignment is no more than two to three pages in length. See note in number three for the format.

Course Grade

The following table is only intended to show the relative weight assigned each of the course requirements.

Participation and preparedness for class	10%
Mid-term in class	25 %
Four (Five) Analyses	55 %

Very Important Notes

1. All hand written documents such as tests, examinations, and vocabulary tests must be written in ink! Your professor cannot and will not read anything written in pencil.
2. All other assignments must be mechanically printed and submitted in hard copy. (Do not submit electronic copies and expect me to read them or to print them.) Follow these requirements, when preparing your assignments!
 - All printing is in black ink and on white paper. Twelve point font. There are no other colors or shading. No borders around pages.
 - Margins must be standard. Spacing is 1.5 or double. Do not mess with margins or spacing or font size in an attempt to decrease or increase the number of pages of the assignment.
 - The fonts used must be twelve point standard fonts. The basic fonts such as Calibri, Times New Roman, Arial, etc.
 - Any Greek and/or Hebrew in the assignment must be in a Greek or Hebrew font. Transliteration is unacceptable except in a direct quotations such as the title of a publication or an article.

Do not put quotation marks around nor italicize nor underline any Greek or Hebrew words which are in Greek or Hebrew fonts! (The rule is that in papers written in English, foreign words which are written in the English alphabet are italicized or underlined but never both. Words written in any other alphabet besides the English/Roman one, need no other treatment.)

Transliteration is not acceptable these papers except in a direct quotation or a title of a published work.

Students will be provided with fonts upon request. However, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the fonts are correctly printed before the paper is handed in. (Not all printers will correctly print all fonts.) This is the student's responsibility. Papers with incorrectly printed fonts will not be read. In the event of "font printing failure" the Greek or Hebrew words may be hand printed in black ink. (This was how it was done from the time of the invention of the type writer until the passing of the same when personal computers were invented.)

- Footnotes and bibliography must be consistent in detail and in an acceptable format which identifies who wrote what, when and where it was published.

- One (and only one) staple in the upper left corner. Do not use plastic covers, rings, binders, etc. Think “Adam’s ale!”

3. You may **contact your professor** by various means.

- a. Office Hours. These Office Hours on campus are subject to meetings called by higher authorities (president, dean, registrar), previously scheduled meetings with other students, the instructor’s health (doctors’ appointments, medical emergencies), snow storms, ice storms, highway closures, automobile failure, and/or “the crick don’t raise” and “California doesn’t freeze over.”

Book an appointment via email so that I know you’re coming and you receive notification of cancelation or being preempted by another appointment (the above notwithstanding).

Your professor is typically available as follows.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| i. Monday | Afternoons (Mornings are given to meetings) |
| ii. Tuesday | Not available |
| iii. Wednesday | Mid-morning to lunch break. |
| iv. Thursday | Mornings until 2:00 |
| v. Friday | Mid-morning to lunch break. |

b. Email in the office: rremin@ambrose.edu

c. Voice in the office: 410-2000 ext 7906

4. **Absences** are intolerable because of the nature of the subject being learned and the manner in which this course is taught, namely the inductive method. If you must miss a class, please work through the lesson(s) missed and then come to class ready for the next lesson. Come to the instructor with any specific problems or questions. In the event you cannot be prepared, you are better being in class unprepared than not in class at all. Too many absences will affect your final grade either by virtue of a poor assignments or an adjustment of your final grade by the instructor.

5. **Classroom Etiquette.** The following activities are considered poor classroom etiquette:

- Coming in late,
- Talking while someone else is talking,
- Disruptive behavior,
- Consumption of meals as opposed to minor snacks,
(Definition: If a knife, fork, spoon or sticks are required it’s a meal!)
- Consumption of snacks in a noisy, smelly and/or disruptive manner,
- Personal grooming,
- Use of electronic devices such as cell phones, *i-pods, etc.*,

- Use of laptops for purposes (*e.g.* watching videos, playing solitaire) not directly connected to the class, and
- The practice of any behaviours considered impolite in adult company or in contravention of the laws of Alberta, specifically those prohibited while driving a motor vehicle.

Depending on the degree and/or frequency of the breach(es) of etiquette, the professor may display his displeasure in any one or more of the following manners:

- Frown, scowl, rolling eye balls (his not yours),
- Utterance of sounds of disgust,
- Sarcastic comments,
- Utterance of specific prohibitions,
- Dismissal of a student from the class,
- Ending the class prematurely, or
- In extreme cases the professor's immediate departure from the classroom.

In extreme cases, in cases where the professor determines that a student's behaviour, attitude or consumables are affecting other student's negatively, the offensive individual and "theirs" will be summarily dismissed from the classroom for a "time out" the length of which will be determined unilaterally by the professor.

6. **Grades for the course.** The available letters for course grades are as follows:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
A+	Excellent
A	
A-	
B+	Good
B	
B-	
C+	Satisfactory
C	
C-	
D+	Minimal Pass
D	
F	Failure

Please note that final grades will be available on your student portal. Printed grade sheets are no longer mailed out.

An **appeal for change of grade** on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar in writing within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for

appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal to review final grades. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

7. **Some more very important dates.**

The **last day to enter** a course without permission and /or **voluntary withdrawal** from a course without financial penalty (**drop**) – **Sunday, January 19, 2014** (Winter semester). These courses will not appear on the student’s transcript.

*Students may change the designation of any class from credit to audit, or drop out of the “audit” up to the “drop” date indicated above. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees. Please note that this is a **new policy**, beginning in the 2010-2011 academic year.*

Withdrawal from courses after the Registration Revision period will not be eligible for tuition refund. The last day to **voluntarily withdraw from a course without academic penalty (withdraw)** – **Friday, March 21** (Winter semester). A grade of “W” will appear on the student’s transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

8. It is **the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar**. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions and Alternative Examination Dates. Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period **unless they have received permission for a “Course Extension” from the Registrar’s Office**. Requests for course extensions or an **alternative examination time** must be submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the appropriate deadline (as listed in the Academic Calendar). Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise “due to circumstances beyond the student’s control.” The deadline to ask for such an extension this semester is **Monday, March 31, 2014**.

The deadline to ask for an alternate examination date is **Monday, March 3, 2014**.

9. **Plagiarism and Cheating.** We at Ambrose are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University College as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.
10. Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

Introduction to Hebrew Exegesis

The semester's exegetical project.

Directions

1. Select a passage of Hebrew poetry from the prophet Isaiah.

Look at the *BHS* or your English translation to determine what is poetry.
Use the new translations as well!

Stay out of Isaiah 52 and 53 – it is beyond your abilities in Hebrew!

Note: Do not select your favorite passage in the Old Testament or one which you have studied, taught or preached before or even heard some great sermons on, nor one that seems particularly relevant to the church today. Pick a different one for three reasons.

First, as a pastor you will preach at least forty times per year and you cannot preach your favorite text forty times (and not get fired).

Second, you are most likely to commit a serious “exegetical fallacy” with a very familiar passage than others, because you will presume to know what it means. In fact, for most people, their exegesis of their favorite passage contains an exegetical fallacy. That fallacy probably gave the passage the very meaning that made it their favorite.

Third, that passage on which you’ve heard so many sermons will get you in trouble because those sermons have predisposed you to a certain exegetical understanding. This will get you into trouble as stated in previous point. Play it safe; exegete something new! This is often actually less work! Remember the purpose of this part of the course is to learn a methodology. It is not to solve the church’s problems nor correct its exegetical foibles.

2. The passage must be the whole of a literary unit. And you must deal with the whole unit. See the next page for more details.

You may have to change the limits of your selection as you progress in the contextual analysis.

Just because someone somewhere preached a sermon on it, does not make it a literary unit. The same applies to your favorite verse.

3. Proceed to complete the contextual analysis.

Contextual Analysis -- Hebrew

The Latin word *contextus* means a weaving. Your passage is a thread or a little patch of threads in a much larger weaving or tapestry. If you prefer yours is a piece of a larger puzzle. By itself your piece might not be all that pretty or all that informative or even recognizable but when put with the whole it is very recognizable. The purpose of contextual analysis is to place your passage in the whole so that the whole may inform your understanding. Moreover, the whole is more important than the parts.

Focus first on the text itself and not on the secondary literature. Read it yourself first. Commentaries are thought stoppers! When you do start to read and research, read as widely as possible but always be selective of what you include in your contextual analysis (or lesson or sermon). You will learn lots of stuff but only include that which directly helps you understand your text. For example, if your text is Isaiah 40 and the authorship discussion does not directly help you to understand something in your chosen text don't even mention it. If a description of the city of Babylon directly informs your discussion, then include it and make the connection explicit. Otherwise, forget to mention it! Another example might be the source hypothesis for the Pentateuch. If the fact that in some scholars minds Genesis one is P (Priestly) source and Genesis two is another source, directly affects your understanding of Genesis one, then explain how it affects. If not don't even mention it!

Presentation of your analysis. Distinguish between research (collection of information) and analysis (working out the relevance of the information). You are called to do analysis after your research. Always present your analysis in the form of *this informs our understanding*. Tell me what *this* is and then tell me *how it informs your understanding*.

The contextual analysis includes the following:

1. **Section Analysis. Define the limits of the section.** How do you know where your section begins and ends? Identify the markers which tell that a new section is beginning and then the markers which indicate where the section ends. Defend your section as a whole unit. N.B. You cannot use the argument, "that's what the prof. assigned." Nor can you use chapter and verse to make your case.
2. **Textual Analysis. Identify and resolve any textual problems.** Before you can go too far in explaining your text you have to know what the text actually is. Identify any textual problems, that is, textual variants. Try to weigh the external and internal evidence as to which reading (textual variant) is the best. Do not confuse the differences in translation of the same word with textual problems (actual different words in the text). Differences in translations are not necessarily due to textual problems. In this section of your analysis only discuss

differences due to actual variations in the original text. Different translations of the same word (text) are part of verbal (word) analysis. Please be very careful with the footnotes in your English translations because they do not consistently nor clearly distinguish between different meanings derived from a variant textual reading, i.e. a different word, and another translation of the very same word.

Resources for Hebrew Textual Criticism

- a. The footnotes to translations such as *NIV*, *NASB*, *NRSV*, etc.
- b. The text critical apparatus of *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*.
- c. These reference books.

Ernst Würtheim, *The Text of the Old Testament, An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica* (trans. Erroll F. Rhodes, 3rd ed., 1995).

- BS1136 W813 1994

Reinhart Wonenberger, *Understanding Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, A Manual for the Users of BHS* (trans. Dwight R. Daniels, 1977).

- Ref BS 715 B58 W87

William R. Scott and Hans Peter Ruger *A Simplified Guide to BHS: Critical Apparatus, Masora, Accents, Unusual Letters & Other Markings* (1987).

Ellis R. Brotzman, *Old Testament Textual Criticism, A Practical Introduction* (1994).

- An appendix contains an English Key to *BHS*.
- BS1136 B765 1994

Ralph W. Klein, *Textual Criticism of the Old Testament, From the Septuagint to Qumran* (Guides to Biblical Scholarship, Fortress, 1974).

Page H. Kelley, *The Masorah of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (1998).

- BS 718 K38 1998

Good commentaries usually begin each section with a discussion of text critical issues. *E.g. Word Biblical Commentaries, International Critical Commentaries.*

3. Genre Analysis. Identify the genre and sub-genre and how it may affect meaning.

- a. Identify the genre of your text. Be as specific with your sub-genre as possible. Genres such as poetry, prose, a psalm, prophecy, etc. are very

broad and too broad to be really useful. You need to be as specific as possible. For example, prophetic literature is the general category – you need to be more specific. Is your text an oracle of salvation, an oracle of woe, a pronouncement of judgment, a call narrative, etc. etc.? Oracles of salvation and pronouncements of judgment are not promises.

- b. Identify the genre of any quotations in your text.
- c. Identify the characteristics of the genre and its purpose. and how the genre affects the meaning of the text, your understanding of the text and the application of the text. For example beatitudes in wisdom literature are neither predictions nor promises. Find out what they are!
- d. Genre affects meaning. How does this genre affect the meaning of the text? How may it affect your understanding of the text and your application of the text? For example, what is the purpose of an oracle of judgment?

Resources:

Handouts distributed in class.

Word Biblical Commentary is consistently good at identifying genre.

Anchor Bible Dictionary

Thomas G. Long, *Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible* (1989), is very useful for understanding how genre affects meaning and thus application.

Sidney Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text, Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature* (1988) is more technical and detailed than Long; also lacks much of anything on wisdom literature.

4. **Sectional Analysis. How does your section fit into the sections before and after your text and then the work as a whole?** Do the sections before and after your section clarify in any way how you should understand and explain or even apply your passage? Does the rest of the gospel or epistle or sermon in which your text is found shed any insight into how your passage should be understood. In the case of prophetic literature, wisdom literature and the Psalms this is redaction criticism. Please distinguish what is derived from the text and what is derived from the redaction critics. For example, exegete Isaiah five and then exegete Isaiah six. However the minute you start to speculate or preach a sermon that says Isaiah six is a response to Isaiah five and that's why they sit side by side, you've moved into redaction criticism.

5. **“Historical” Analysis. Is there anything in this text’s historical context and its economic, social, political and/or religious situation which helps or sets perimeters for the interpretation of the selected unit of text.** Often this question involves a discussion of authorship and dating. You may need to be aware the date of historical event and the date of composition are not the same. As the exegete you need to be aware of how your secondary sources (commentaries, Bible dictionaries, etc.) are viewing these matters because of the direct impact on what their interpretation. Sometimes it doesn’t seem to matter, at first at least. You need to be conscious of these distinctions when researching and writing. Here follow some examples.
- a. Deuteronomy. Many if not most scholars posit a late date for Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy covers the same content as Exodus, for example, but what if it was written at the time of the reforms of Hezekiah and the time of Moses? How is this going to affect its perspective and emphasis. Most important you need to know that the commentator you’re reading is working with this pre-supposition. Your knowing this is not grounds for dismissing the commentator’s work as a whole but something to be taken into evaluation of each section. Sometimes it doesn’t seem to matter, other times it is significant.
 - b. Chronicles. Samuel/Kings describe the same events as Chronicles. Chronicles was written considerably later. Chronicles also has a significantly different emphasis.
 - c. Isaiah. Who wrote Isaiah is not important *per se*. It is generally assumed in the secondary literature that “Isaiah was written by at least three persons.” Authorship as such is not the issue, and so don’t write on in this assignment. What is the issue is that the oracles found in the book we call Isaiah appear to have been delivered in at least three very different periods – pre-exilic, exilic and post-exilic. Now as you exegete a section from chapter 66, you need to know the presuppositions of any secondary sources which you use. Do your sources assume an exilic or a post-exilic date for the section. Watch out not to pit against each other interpretations with different pre-suppositions. It is always more accurate to speak of pre-exilic, exilic and post-exilic than First, Second or Third Isaiah.
 - d. 2 Kings 23:29 is an excellent example (albeit prose) of how knowledge of the historical, political and military situation will affect your interpretation of a particular event. The relationship between Necho, pharaoh of Egypt, Ashur-uballit II (an Assyrian but not yet king) and Josiah is really not all that clear. Read also 2 Chronicles 35:20-24. So, what was Josiah thinking that got him killed? Was he a good guy or a bad guy in this event?

6. **Canonical Analysis. How does your section fit into the whole of the OT (LXX) and NT?** Here pay attention to similarities and differences between your passage and other similar passages. How does your section use other parts of the Hebrew testament? E.g. Jeremiah quotes Isaiah, etc. How is your OT section used in the NT? E.g. Ezekiel in Revelation.

A concordance is often helpful at this point. Commentaries such as Word Biblical Commentaries are useful at this point.

7. **Global Analysis. How does your text and the subject(s) dealt with fit into the ancient world?** Consider if there is anything (text and/or picture) in the Ancient Near East, inter-testamental Jewish world, Hellenistic world or even the world of Qumran which will help you understand the section. Does this help you understand and / or interpret your text? Would the answers to these last two questions be different if you were Greek, Roman or Jewish?

TDOT is usually a helpful place to start. Commentaries may help but *Anchor Bible Dictionary* may prove more useful.

B. Gowan, Donald E. *Bridge Between the Testaments*. (3rd ed., Pickwick Publications, 1986).

Pilch, John J. *Introducing the Cultural Context of the Old Testament*. Hear the Word, Volume One. (Paulist Press, 1991).

Davies, Philip R, Rogerson, John. *The Old Testament World²* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2005).