

Biblical Languages

Given that this course is for a Seminary and training men for the preaching and pastoral ministry, the focus is on providing an education in the Biblical Hebrew and Greek that enables the man of God to preach more accurately and with greater insight.

It teaches the fundamentals of Biblical Hebrew and Greek so that the student can read the Word of God in its original languages and use the abundance of language resources available to him, in the service of sermon preparation and preaching.

Since the Seminary only meets every four weeks, and effective language study requires frequent contact, the Biblical Languages courses are taught on a weekly basis via Skype. The intention is to deliver courses covering the vocabulary, grammar, and syntax of Koine Greek and Hebrew.

As time may be restricted for some students of the Seminary, due to church or work commitments, the Biblical Languages courses are not mandatory, but students are strongly encouraged to take them. Upon completion of the course, an individual should be able to translate and explain the grammar of simple passages as well as evaluate the accuracy of commentaries and suchlike.

In addition to the courses teaching the Biblical languages, there is also a required course aimed at familiarizing the students with the wide array of resources available to them including concordances, Bible dictionaries, encyclopedias, lexicons, grammars, commentaries, biographies, internet resources, and computer software.

Insofar as we love the gospel, to that same extent, let us study the ancient tongues. And let us notice that without the knowledge of languages we can scarcely preserve the gospel. Languages are the sheath which hides the sword of the Spirit, they are the chest in which this jewel is enclosed, the goblet holding this draught. Where the languages are studied, the proclamation will be fresh and powerful, the scriptures will be searched, and the faith will be constantly rediscovered through ever new words and deeds.

Martin Luther

The language programme follows a rotation of Greek, rest year, Hebrew: so, 2018 was Greek, 2019 a rest year, 2020 Hebrew, 2021 Greek, 2022 a rest year, 2023 Hebrew, 2024 Greek, and so on. This enables all students to have the opportunity of studying Greek and Hebrew during their three years at the Seminary.

Courses taught in the syllabus

2018

A course in Koine Greek was taught, beginning with some lectures in the classroom before continuing weekly online Skype sessions. When convenient to teacher and student, tutorial sessions were also conducted outside the main timetable during the study weekends. All of this was done using 'A Primer of Biblical Greek' by N. Clayton Croy' as the main textbook, which covers the basics of Koine Greek grammar, a helpful starting vocabulary enabling the reader to recognise 85% of the words in the NT, and exercises throughout. In addition to these weekly exercises, there were also quizzes on what had been learned.

Summary of additional lectures:

A brief but comprehensive overview was given of the vast array of resources available to the preacher, both digital and book-form. This included showcasing some of the computer software that is either freely downloadable, or available for purchase. Some directions and advice were also provided to the student in connection with researching and writing seminary assignments.

2019

This was a 'rest' year for the students.

There were five lectures on the fundamentals of English Grammar, following the book 'Essential English Grammar' by Philip Gucker. This was to help the students in their writing of assignments as well as to provide them with the grammatical understanding efficiently to learn Hebrew and/or Greek.

2020

It is planned to teach Biblical Hebrew this year, following the same general approach as for the Greek in 2018.