

## How to Learn Hebrew

### *How to Have a Successful First Semester*

1. Have a good attitude.
  - a. Learning Hebrew can be hard at times, but it is rewarding—find joy in your studies.
  - b. You are fluent in at least one language already. Therefore you have proven that you have the ability to learn languages—no excuses.
2. Do not fall behind in your studies.
  - a. At the pace that first year Hebrew moves, if you fall behind it will be hard to catch back up again.
  - b. Learn the vocabulary of each chapter well—it will bite you later if you don't.
  - c. Learn everything thoroughly unless I specifically tell you otherwise.
3. Studying consistently is much better than studying in large blocs once or twice a week.
  - a. Pick a specific time and place each and every day (besides Sundays) that is specifically designated as your Hebrew study time and place. Design your schedule around this time, not the other way around.

### *Ideal Study Sequence While at Seminary*

1. First Semester—Alphabet, nouns, strong verbs, preliminary syntax, vocab.
2. Second Semester—Weak verbs, intermediate syntax, simple readings, vocab.
3. Rapid Reading—Read Hebrew narrative, nail down vocab.
4. Hebrew Composition—English to Hebrew, accents, advanced syntax, vocab.
5. Narrative Exegesis
6. Poetry Exegesis

### *How to Prepare for a Lifetime of Studying the Old Testament in Hebrew*

1. Learn Hebrew vocabulary well. It will be very frustrating and you will likely give up if you don't. Recommended resource: George M. Landes, *Building Your Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary*, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
2. Get to the point while you are at Seminary where you do your daily devotional reading in Hebrew.
3. Do not read the Bible out of BibleWorks. Only use it when you are stuck and don't know how to read a specific word or phrase or when you are doing searches.
4. Read a Hebrew grammar once every year.
5. Read Hebrew in a group. Get to know at least one person, possibly another pastor in the area, who is willing to meet with you weekly or biweekly to read Hebrew together.
6. Preach half of your sermons and teach half of your lessons out of the Old Testament. Prepare your sermons and lessons from the Hebrew text.
7. Complete your study of the text before you look at commentaries or helps.
8. Understand *why* a translation(s) rendered your passage of study the way it did.
9. Use solid commentaries that deal with the Hebrew text. Eschew preaching commentaries for textual study.
10. Follow at least one high-level academic journal that includes Old Testament studies. Get a subscription or find a local library that carries them. For examples see the links to journals on [awilum.com](http://awilum.com).