M.A. in Hebraic Roots of Christianity

Purpose and Objectives

The M.A. in Hebraic Roots of Christianity is a unique program that stands at the busy intersection of Christianity and Judaism. Students pursuing the M.A. have the opportunity to delve deeply in the complex yet rich Hebraic world out of which Christianity arose. The field of study is much larger than the Jewishness of Jesus, embracing not only the dynamic world Second Temple Judaism but the processes by which the early Church Fathers were influenced by Hebraic life and thought. As a result, students are exposed to ways that Christians and Jews in the twenty-first century can explore constructive dialogue on matters of theology, identity, faith and practice. The degree program also allows students the flexibility to pursue their own specialized interests within the field.

Students enrolled in the M.A. in Hebraic Roots of Christianity have ample opportunity to draw upon the rich academic and cultural resources of Jerusalem throughout their period of study. One is hard pressed to find a more appropriate place to study the development of early Christianity out of Judaism than in Jerusalem, the city in which the church was born. Here students are immersed in active, living communities, both Jewish and Christian, that trace their descent directly to the days of the New Testament. In addition, the world comes to Jerusalem—conferences and seminars held throughout the city beckon students to interact with biblical scholars and experts in the broad and lively fields of Judaism and early Christianity.

The M.A. in Hebraic Roots of Christianity can prepare a student to pursue further work in biblical studies or early Christianity at the doctoral level, enhance a teaching, preaching or pastoral ministry, or broaden his or her general knowledge of the origins of Christianity. At the same time, students are challenged to incorporate the fruit of their critical inquiry by deepening their personal walk with the Lord.

Parameters

The M.A. degree in Hebraic Roots of Christianity includes 48 semester credit hours of course work as outlined below. The degree is designed to be completed within two calendar years, although students choosing to pursue the thesis track are given an additional year to complete all of the work for the degree. Students for whom English is not their native language are expected to be able to finish the degree in three years if taking the non-thesis track, and four years if pursuing the thesis track.

Modern Language Acquisition

One of the unique opportunities afforded to students in Jerusalem is learning modern Hebrew. The acquisition of modern Hebrew not only helps to solidify a student's work in the language of the Hebrew Bible, but also opens a world of scholarship not readily available otherwise. Thus, during their two-years of course work students in the Hebraic Roots of Christianity M.A. program are encouraged to augment their curriculum with a

parallel track of modern Hebrew acquisition at an area Ulpan (a modern Hebrew language learning institute). A student's advisor can best direct the student to the Hebrew courses that best suit each individual situation. At the end of the degree program, the student will be able to sit for a proficiency exam that will gauge the level of modern Hebrew attained. At the student's request, the level of proficiency, as gauged by the exam, will be indicated on the student's official academic transcript.

Curriculum for the M.A. in Hebraic Roots of Christianity

Archaeology (3 hours)

Biblical Archaeology II—Persian through Byzantine Periods (3)

Geography (4 hours)

Physical Settings of the Bible (4)

History (12 hours)

History of the Second Temple Period (3)
Cultural Background of the Bible (3)
The Parables of Jesus and Rabbinic *Meshalim* (3)
Intertestamental Literature (3)

Biblical Languages (14 hours)

Biblical Hebrew I (4)
Biblical Hebrew II (4)
Readings in Biblical Hebrew Narrative (3) OR
Introduction to Aramaic (3)
Post-biblical Hebrew: Second Temple Period (3) OR
Introduction to Jewish Palestinian Aramaic (3)

Context Courses in the above areas (9 hours)

Archaeology of Jerusalem II (3)
Rabbinic Thought and Literature (3)
Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls (3)
Hermeneutics of Old Testament Texts in Jewish and Christian Tradition (3)
The Gospels in their Jewish Setting (3)
Text Studies in Mishnah and other Tannaitic Literature in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity (3)
Jewish Roots of Christian Worship and Liturgy (3)
Iconographic Art in Judaism and Early Christianity (3)
Seminar in Hebraic Roots of Christianity (3)
Guided Research in History (3)
Guided Research in Hebrew and Cognate Languages (3)

Thesis-track degree: 6 hours

Guided Research on Thesis Topic (2)
Thesis Writing (4)

Non-Thesis-track degree: 6 hours of additional context courses

Bible Content Examinations

Old Testament Bible Content Examination
New Testament Bible Content Examination

Comprehensive - Integrative Examinations

Issues in the Hebraic Roots of Christianity Examination
Hebrew Examination

Proficiency Examination in Modern Hebrew or Arabic (optional)

Total Credit Hours: 48