

## **M.A. in Hebrew and Cognate Languages**

### **Purpose and Objectives**

Students enrolled in the M.A. in Hebrew and Cognate Languages have ample opportunity to draw upon the rich resources of Jerusalem and the lands of the Bible. One is hard pressed to find a more appropriate place to study biblical Hebrew and its closely associated cognate languages than in Jerusalem. Here students are immersed in modern Hebrew and Arabic speaking environments, important for facilitating competence in the ancient languages used in the Holy Land. Many of the sites and the geographical realities that interface with ancient texts are found here. Further, the world comes to Jerusalem—conferences and seminars held throughout the city and country beckon students to interact with biblical scholars and language experts.

The M.A. in Hebrew and Cognate Languages is designed to provide all graduates with a core understanding of biblical Hebrew and its cognate languages, including their grammar, syntax and literatures. Through an integrative curriculum, students develop a high level of competence in the languages of the Hebrew Bible in their historic and linguistic contexts. In the process, they make contact with the geographical, historical and cultural realities that interface with ancient texts. Particular emphasis is placed on the biblical Hebrew language as a critical aspect of the holistic cultural world of the Bible. Simply put, students learn to become intimate with the Bible that Jesus read.

The M.A. in Hebrew and Cognate Languages can prepare a student to pursue further studies at the doctoral level, enhance a teaching, preaching or pastoral ministry, or broaden one's general biblical knowledge for teaching in the humanities, ministering overseas, or doing Bible translation. At the same time, students are challenged to incorporate the fruit of their critical inquiry with a deepening of their personal walk with the Lord.

### **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, students in the M.A. program in Hebrew and Cognate Languages are encouraged during their two-years of course work 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 Hebrew and Cognate Languages**

*Hebrew and Cognate Languages: 20-24 hours from the following:*

- Biblical Hebrew I (4)
- Biblical Hebrew II (4)
- Readings in Biblical Hebrew Narrative (3)
- Readings in Historical and Geographical Texts (3)
- Readings in Poetic Texts (3)
- Post-biblical Hebrew: Second Temple Period (3)
- Comparative Semitics (3)
- Introduction to Aramaic (3)
- Introduction to Jewish Palestinian Aramaic (3)
- Canaanite Dialects (3)

*Geography: 4 hours*

- Physical Settings of the Bible (4)

*Context Courses: 14-18 hours from the following:*

- Biblical Archaeology I—Old Testament Period (3)
- Biblical Archaeology II—Persian through Byzantine Periods (3)
- Sources from Mesopotamia related to the Land of Israel (3)
- Sources from the Levant related to the Land of Israel (3)
- History of Ancient Israel (3)
- History of the Second Temple Period (3)
- Cultural Background of the Bible (3)
- Intertestamental Literature (3)
- The Parables of Jesus and Rabbinic *Meshalim* (3)
- Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls (3)

*Thesis-track degree: 6 hours*

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

*Non-Thesis-track degree: 6 hours of additional electives*

*Two Bible Content Examinations*

*Two Comprehensive - Integrative Examinations*

*Proficiency Examination in Modern Hebrew or Arabic (optional)*

**Total Credit Hours: 48**