

## *The BRGS Comprehensive Exam in Bible*

The BRGS Comprehensive Exam in Bible is administered three times per year by Dr. Richard Steiner (rsteiner@ymail.yu.edu). To be eligible to take the exam, students must (1) have officially completed all coursework and (2) register by the deadline printed in the official calender. Students who do not register in time or who have Incompletes on their record will not be allowed to take the exam.

The exam is based entirely on the attached reading list and the lectures of the three required courses: Biblical Hebrew and Introduction to Biblical Studies I and II. The readings have been pared down to the absolute minimum, and students are expected to know them well. The questions are relatively specific. On any given exam, they cover only a small fraction of the assigned material. They must be answered in a detailed manner, citing specific references and examples. B is the passing grade.

Students must answer the BH question plus any three of the four remaining questions, for a total of four questions (25 points each). The BH question is based on T. O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*, lessons 1-51. It is a passage in English to be translated into fully vocalized Standard Biblical Hebrew using consecutive forms, infinitive constructs, את, and ויהי/והיה (at the beginning) wherever possible.

Reading List for MA Comprehensive Exam in Bible:

The bibliographical entries in the course syllabus for BIB 5115: Intro to Biblical Studies II are required readings for the comprehensive exam. The following Reading List contains additional new readings as well as the BIB 5115 course readings to which special attention should be paid:

I. Biblical and ANE History:

J. Bright, *A History of Israel* or Michael D. Coogan (ed.), *The Oxford History of the Biblical World* or J. H. Hayes & J. M. Miller, *Israelite and Judaean History*.

✓ A. R. Millard, "Methods of Studying the Patriarchal Narratives as Ancient Texts," in A. R. Millard & D. J. Wiseman, *Essays on Patriarchal Narratives*, pp. 35-51.

H. Tadmor, "The Chronology of the First Temple Period," *The Age of the Monarchies: Political History* (World History of the Jewish People 4/1, ed. by A. Malamat), 44-60.

✓ B. L. Eichler, "Nuzi and the Bible: A Retrospective," *DUMU-E2-DUB-BA-A: Studies in Honor of Ake W. Sjöberg* (ed. H. Behrens et al), 107-119 (article on reserve).

II. Ethno-linguistic Elements in the ANE

A. J. Hoerth, *Peoples of the Old Testament World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998 or D. J. Wiseman, *Peoples of Old Testament Times*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973.

III. Biblical and ANE Religions

Y. Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel* (M. Greenberg, trans.), 1-148.

IV. Biblical and ANE Literature

J. H. Walton, *Ancient Israelite Literature in its Cultural Context*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989.

V. Biblical Archaeology

W. Dever, "The Middle Bronze Age: Zenith of Urban Canaanite Culture," *Biblical Archaeologist* 50 (1987) 149-177.

A. Leonard, "The Late Bronze Age," *Biblical Archaeologist* 52 (1989) 1-39.

E. Block-Smith & Nakhai, "Iron Age I," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 62 (1999) 62-92.

W. Dever, *Recent Archaeological Discoveries and Biblical Research*, 119-172.

or for more detailed information

A. Mazar, *Archaeology of the land of the Bible*, 91-549.

Submitted by BLE 8/15/03

### CANON:

S.Z. Leiman, The Canonization of Hebrew Scripture: The Talmudic and Midrashic Evidence (New Haven, 1991), pp. 51-72 and notes.

S.Z. Leiman, "Inspiration and Canonicity: Reflections on the Formation of the Biblical Canon," in E.P. Sanders, ed., Jewish and Christian Self-Definition (Philadelphia, 1981), vol. 2, pp. 56-63.

### MASORAH:

A. Dotan, Ben Asher's Creed: A Study of the History of the Controversy (Missoula, 1977).

M. Cohen, "מקראות גדולות הכתר: יהושע-שופטים" in M. Cohen, ed., מבוא למחדורת הכתר (Jerusalem, 1992), pp. 1-57.

### SEPTUAGINT:

E. Tov, "The Rabbinic Tradition Concerning the "Alterations" Inserted into the Greek Pentateuch and their Relation to the Original Text of the LXX," Journal for the Study of Judaism 15 (1984), pp. 65-89.

I. Gruenwald, "הפולמוס בענין תרגום התורה ליוונית" in תעודה 4(1986), pp. 66-78.

### DEAD SEA SCROLLS:

F.M. Cross, "The Old Testament at Qumran" in his The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies (Grand Rapids, 1980 or later editions), pp. 163-194.

E. Tov, "The Biblical Texts Found in Qumran" in his Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible (Assen, 1992), pp. 100-117.

**TARGUM:**

J. Heinemann, "Early Halakhah in the Palestinian Targumim," Journal of Jewish Studies 25(1974), pp. 114-122.

Y. Maori, "על יחסו של תרגום התורה המיוחס ליונתן בן עוזיאל למקורות ההלכה" 3(1983), תעודה ח' pp. 235-250.

P.S. Alexander, "Jewish Aramaic Translations of Hebrew Scriptures" in M.J. Mulder, ed., Mikra (Assen, 1988), pp. 217-253.

**MEDIEVAL JEWISH EXEGESIS:**

Rashi:

A. Grossman, "הגהות ר' שמעיה ונוסח פירוש רש"י לתורה" 60(1991), תרביץ pp. 67-98.

E. Touito, "האמנם משקף כתב-יד לייפציג 1 את הנוסח המקורי של פירוש רש"י לתורה?" 61(1992), תרביץ pp. 85-115.

Ibn Ezra:

U. Simon, "ראב"ע ורד"ק: שתי גישות לשאלת מהימנות נוסח המקרא" 6(1968), Bar-Ilan Annual pp. 191-237.

U. Simon, Four Approaches to the Book of Psalms(Albany, 1991).

Ramban:

B. Septimus, "'Open Rebuke and Concealed Love': Nahmanides and the Andalusian Tradition" in I. Twersky, ed., Rabbi Moses Nahmanides (Ramban): Explorations in His Religious and Literary Virtuosity (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 11-34.

M. Idel, "ר' משה בן נחמן--קבלה, הלכה ומנהיגות רוחנית" 64(1995), תרביץ pp. 535-580.