

Bernard Revel Graduate School  
BIB 6212: Biblical Cosmogony  
Genesis: Chapters 1-2  
Spring 2004 -- B. L. Eichler  
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## REFERENCE LIST

### I. Text Tools

#### Grammars:

- E. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (translated by A. E. Cowley).  
P. Jouon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (translated and revised by T. Muraoka).  
J. Blau, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*.  
T. O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*.  
M. Greenberg, *Introduction to Hebrew*.  
B. Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*.  
J. J. Owens, *Analytical Key to the Old Testament*.

#### Dictionaries:

- W. Gesenius, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (revised by F. Brown, S. R. Driver and C. A. Briggs). Biblical verse index by B. Einspahr.  
L. Kohler and W. Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*.  
W. L. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*  
G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*,  
(translated by David E. Green).

#### Concordances:

- A. Even-Shoshan, *Konkordantsyah Hadashah le-Torah, Nevi'im u-Khetuvim*.  
S. Mandelkern, *Konkordantsyah la-Tanach*.

### II. Commentaries

#### Post-Biblical:

- Targum Onkeles (M. Aberbach and B. Grossfeld, *Targum Onkelos to Genesis*).  
M. M. Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*.  
Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* (ed. Thackeray, *Loeb Classical Library*,  
Josephus 4, Book I i (lines 1- 51). Cf. T. W. Franxman, *Genesis and the "Jewish Antiquities" of Flavius Josephus*.

Medieval:

- Solomon ben Isaac, *Commentary on the Torah* (A. Berliner; C. B. Chavel).  
Samuel ben Meir, *Commentary on the Torah* (A. Bromberg).  
Abraham ibn Ezra, *Commentary on the Torah* (A. Weiser; L. Prijs).  
Moshe ben Nachman, *Commentary on the Torah* (C. B. Chavel).  
Isaac Abarbanel, *Commentary on the Torah*.  
Saadya ben Joseph, *Commentary on Bereshit* (Y. Qapah; M. Zucker).  
David Qimhi, *Commentary on the Torah* (M. Kammelherr).  
Obadiah Sforno, *Be'ur la-Torah* (Z. Gotlib).

Modern:

- U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (tr. 1961).  
S. R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis* (12th ed., 1926).  
H. Gunkel, *Genesis* (Handkommentar zum Alten Testament, 1901).  
D. Z. Hoffmann, *Sefer Bereshit*.  
B. Jacob, *The First Book of the Bible: Genesis*.  
G. von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary* (rev. tr. 1972).  
N. M. Sarna, *Genesis = Bereshit* (JPS Commentary, 1989).  
J. Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis* (International Critical Commentary, 2nd ed., 1930).  
E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* (Anchor Bible, 1964).  
G. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (Word Biblical Commentary).  
C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary* (tr. 1974).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR FURTHER STUDY

### I. Ancient Near East

Texts in Translation:

- J. B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Bible* (2nd ed. + supplement = 3rd ed.)  
W. W. Hallo, *The Context of Scripture* (1999)  
S. Dalley, *Myths from Mesopotamia* (1989).  
B. Foster, *Before the Muses* (2nd ed., 1996)  
\_\_\_\_\_, *From Distant Days* (1995).  
A. Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis* (2nd ed., 1951).  
S. H. Hooke, *Middle Eastern Mythology* (1963).  
S. N. Kramer, *Sumerian Mythology* (1961).  
\_\_\_\_\_, *The Sumerians*.  
W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard, *Atra-hasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood*.

Studies:

- Z. Adar, *The Book of Genesis: An Introduction to the Biblical World*.  
B. S. Childs, *Myth and Reality in the Old Testament* (2nd ed., 1962).

- H. Frankfort, *The Problem of Similarity in Ancient Near Eastern Religions*.
- R. H. Hess and D. T. Tsumura, *I Studied Inscriptions from Before the Flood: Ancient Near Eastern, Literary and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1-11* (1994).
- D. Irvin, *Mytharion: Comparison of Tales from the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East*
- W. G. Lambert, "Old Testament Mythology in its Ancient Near Eastern Context," in J. A. Emerton, ed., *Congress Volume: Jerusalem 1986 (Vetus Testamentum Supplement 40 [1988], 124-143*.
- N. M. Sarna, *Understanding Genesis*.
- D. T. Tsumura, *The Earth and Waters in Genesis 1 and 2*.
- M. Weinfeld, *Genesis (Olam ha-Tanakh)*.

## II. Literary Structure

- Y. Carmiel, *Im Sefer Bereshit*.
- U. Cassuto, *Sefer Bereshit u Mivnehu*.
- G. Coats, *Genesis with an Introduction to Narrative Literature*.
- J. B. Doukhan, *The Genesis Creation Story: Its Literary Structure*.
- J. P. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art in Genesis*.
- W. H. Green, *The Unity of the Book of Genesis*.
- J. M. Grintz, *Yihudo ve-Qadmuto shel Sefer Bereshit*.
- H. Gunkel, *The Legends of Genesis*.
- N. Habel, *Literary Criticism of the Old Testament*.
- E. Leach, *Genesis as Myth and Other Essays*.
- P. D. Miller, Jr., *Genesis 1-11: Studies in Structure and Theme*.

## III. Modern Orthodox Jewish Thought

- J. B. Soloveitchik, *Lonely Man of Faith (=Tradition 7 [1965] 5-67)*.
- Y. Rozensohn, "Beri'ah ve-hashgahah: Lehavanat Perek Bet be-Sefer Bereshit," *Megadim 7*.
- M. Breuer, "Beri'at Shamayim va-'Arets," *Megadim 11*.
- M. Breuer, *Pirqei Bereishit*.
- S. Carmy, *Modern Scholarship in the Study of Torah*, esp. article by M. Breuer, "The Study of Bible and the Fear of Heaven," and response by S. Leiman.

## SYLLABUS AND ASSIGNMENTS

### I. Introductory Orientation

#### Goals and Scope of the Course:

Determining Textual Meaning  
Textual Tools  
Ancient, Medieval and Modern Commentaries  
Assignments and Grading  
Plain Sense of the Text

#### Biblical and Mesopotamian Cosmogony:

Genesis 1-3  
Enuma Elish: Epic of Creation  
Atrahasis: Story of the Flood  
Y. Kaufmann, "The Bible and Mythical Polytheism," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 70 (1951) 179-97.  
J. J. Finkelstein, "Bible and Babel," *Commentary* 1958, 431-44.  
R. Hess & D. Tsumura, "Genesis and Ancient Near Eastern Stories of Creation and the Flood: An Introduction," *I Studied Inscriptions from Before the Flood*, pp. 27-57.

### II. Close Reading of the Hebrew Text of Chapters 1-2

#### Grammatical Problems:

Morphological  
Syntactical

#### Semantic Problems:

Lexicographic  
Contextual

### III. Written Assignment One (**due March 1**)

#### Other Biblical Creation Accounts:

R. Graves & R. Patai, *Hebrew Myths: The Book of Genesis*, pp. 21-40.

### IV. Written Assignment Two (**due March 29**)

Lower Textual Criticism:

R. Kittel and P. Kahle, *Biblia Hebraica*.

K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*

Comparison of the Formulaic Structure of MT and LXX

E. Tov, "Textual Criticism (OT)," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* 6,  
pp. 393-441.

E. Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Bible*.

#### V. Written Assignment Three (due May 18)

Higher Textual Criticism:

Comparison of Chapter 1 and Chapter 2

N. Habel, *Literary Criticism of the Old Testament*, pp. 18-27.

H. Bloom, *Modern Critical Interpretation of Genesis* (esp. R. Alter,  
"Composite Artistry P and J").

### GRADING

Class Preparation & Participation	35%
Written Assignment One	15%
Written Assignment Two	15%
Written Assignment Three	35%

Note: Late papers will be penalized a grade point per week.

## TEXT QUESTIONS

### Chapter 1: 1

1. Syntax: What are the two positions regarding the syntactical relationship of the first verse to the other verses in the chapter?

a) Check the dictionaries for the different meanings of the term *r'syt*.

b) Check the concordances for an understanding of the syntactical usage of the term *r'syt*. Does it always appear in the construct state or are there examples of it appearing in an absolute state?

c) If *r'syt* is a construct, to what is it constructed in our verse?

2. What are the semantic implications of the two different syntactic positions?

3. Lexicography: Does the term *br'* have a special connotation?

a) Check the dictionaries for the meaning of the term *br'* in each of the stems (= *binyanim*) in which it occurs.

b) Check the concordances for the different usages of the related terms: *br'*, *yšr*, *'sh*, by noting the direct objects of each of these verbal occurrences.

### Chapter 1:2

1. Lexicography: Determine the meaning of the following terms:

a) *thw wbhw*, b) *thwm*, c) *rwḥ 'lkym*, and d) *mrḥpt*.

After reviewing the commentaries, check dictionaries and concordances to see if you can further clarify their meaning.

### Chapter 1:3-4

1. Grammar: Consult the biblical grammars to discuss the morphology of the verbal forms:

a) *wayyo'mer*

b) *yehiy*

2. Grammar: consult the biblical dictionaries and grammars to note the various meanings and usages of the particle *ky* in Biblical Hebrew. Determine the syntactical relationship of the particle *ky* within the verse.

Read: A. Schoors, "The Particle  $\eta\phi$ ," Remembering all the way ... : A collection of Old Testament studies published on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the

Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap in Nederland by B. Albrektson .et al.,  
(Oudtestamentische studiën., 21) Leiden : E.J. Brill, 1981, 240-276

3. Read the short note by J. Kugel, "The Adverbial Use of KI TOB," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 99/3 (1980) 433-35. Do you agree with his translation of the verse?

### Chapter 1:5

1. Lexicography: Consult the biblical dictionaries and concordances to understand the various meanings of the action *qr'*.
2. Syntax: Note the change in the verbal sequence in this verse. What does this syntactical change denote?
3. Semantics: What does the clause *wyhy 'rb wyhy bqr* denote? Read Stroes, "Does Day Begin in the Evening or in the Morning," *Vetus Testamentum* 16 (1966) 460-75.
4. Lexicography: Is the term *'hd* used only as a cardinal number or does it also function as an ordinal number?

### Chapter 1: 6-8

1. What does the term *raqi'a* mean? First determine the basic semantic range of the verbal root *rq'*; then determine the morphological pattern of the noun and the meaning of that nominal pattern (consult Jouon's grammar, chapter 3 on noun patterns).
2. Is this conception of the creation of the heavens different from that found in Psalms 104:2 and Isaiah 40:22?
3. What is the contextual problem raised by the verb *wayya'as*? How is the problem answered by the commentaries?
4. What is the meaning of the expression *wayehiy ken*?
5. What does the term *šamayim* connote?

### Chapter 1:9-10

1. What is the basic semantic root of the verb *qwh*? Does this root have any homonyms? What nouns are associated with these verbal roots? Is it possible to establish any semantic relationship between the homonyms?
2. What is the morphological pattern of *miqweh* and what meaning does this pattern impart?