

OT770: OT Poetical Books
Spring Semester 2012
Wednesdays, 6:30 – 9:45 PM

Michael E. Haynes Academic Building, 90 Warren St, Roxbury, MA 02119

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary — CUME

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Tentative Syllabus for OT770: Old Testament Poetical Books

1. Course Description

A study of the nature and techniques of Old Testament (hereafter OT) poetry, including: metrics, line and strophic structure, historical-grammatical exegesis and text criticism. Special introduction to the various poetical books of the OT and samples of exegesis, emphasizing the Psalms.

As the fourth in a series of four Hebrew MDiv required courses, OT770 has a Hebrew language component and students must have completed OL502 and the OT600-level course with a passing grade. Additionally, there will be a competency examination on February 1, 2012 covering portions of the Hebrew text of Psalms 8 and 19. Students who do not pass will be required to take the re-sit competency exam on February 8, covering Pss. 8, 19 and 22. Students must pass one of these exams to continue.

This course addresses these GCTS goals: MDiv 1-5; MAUM/YM 1-2, 5; MAEM 1-3, 6; MABL 1-2; MAOT 1, 3-4; MACO 1-4, 6; and ThM 1-2.

2. Learning Outcomes: Resulting from successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

Thinking:

- Understand the content, themes, and theological message of selected OT poetic passages
- Understand the legitimate ways of interpreting Hebrew poetry
- Understand geographical, chronological, historical, Messianic, and canonical matters
- Understand the necessity of preaching, teaching, and counseling using poetry

Being:

- Become more dedicated to the LORD as revealed in the OT and NT
- Become deeply committed to apply the truths and principles of the OT
- Become more mature in one's Christian life
- Become more sensitive to Jesus' appropriation of the Hebrew Bible

Doing:

- Engage in discussions related to the composition of OT poetry
- Teach, preach or counsel using passages in the poetic books
- Memorize a Psalm in Hebrew
- Apply the truths of Psalms and other pericopes¹ to one's Christian life

3. Course Requirements and Assignments

¹ **Pericope** = a self-contained unit of Scripture; not to be confused with a **periscope**, a non-line-of-site viewing device.

Contact Time with Instructor

- A. This is a three-credit course meeting for 30 hours (3 hours each week for 10 weeks of a 13-week semester). The two Reading Weeks are Feb. 20-24 and Mar. 26-30, 2012; use them wisely.
- B. You are expected to grammatically tag, translate, and comment on exegetical points in approximately ten chapters of the Hebrew text of the poetical books.
- C. The average GCTS student will spend 120 hours outside class to achieve a C for the course.

Required Resources:

A. Required Texts:

- 1. Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, New York: Basic Books, 1985. ISBN 0465004318.
- 2. Boice, James M. *Psalms 1-41: An Expositional Commentary*, vol. 1, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994. ISBN 080106578X.
- 3. Garrett, Duane A. *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon*. NAC, vol. 14, Nashville: Broadman, 1993. ISBN 0805401148.
- 4. Stuart, Douglas *Old Testament Exegesis*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, (4th Edition), 2009. ISBN 0664233449.

B. Recommended Texts: (the 600-level content of these books is assumed):

- 1. Brotzman, Ellis R. *OT Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993. ISBN 0801010659.
- 2. Soulen, Richard N. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, Atlanta: John Knox, (2nd Ed.), 1981. ISBN 0804200459.
- 3. Carson, D. A. *Exegetical Fallacies*, Grand Rapids: Baker, (2nd Ed.), 1996. ISBN 0853646775.
- 4. Weingreen, J. *Introduction to the Critical Study of the Text of the Hebrew Bible*, NY: Oxford, 2002. ISBN 0198154534.

C. An English Bible: preferably the English Standard Version (ESV) or the New American Standard Bible (NASB). Be sure to bring the Bible to class each week. You are encouraged to do your reading in your own first-language edition, but for class purposes, the dialogues will be in English and Hebrew.

D. An **unmarked** Hebrew Text for quizzes, the Hebrew Mid-Term, and the Final Examination.

Elliger, K. and W. Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1977).

- Paperback Edition: 1574 pages. Dimensions (in inches): 1.89 x 7.17 x 5.22. Publisher: American Bible Society; 5th edition 1997. ISBN 3438052229
- Hardcover Edition: 1629 pages. Dimensions (Same as the paperback edition above). Publisher: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1990. ISBN 3438052199
- Large Print Hardcover Edition (104067): 1574 pages. Dimensions (in inches): 2.48 x 9.6 x 6.55. Publisher: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft; Editio 2. emendata edition, 1990. ISBN 3438052180
- Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament One Volume Hardcover Edition (*Biblia Sacra, Utriusque Testamenti, Editio Hebraica et Graeca*): Dimensions (in inches): 2.75 x 7.75 x 5.50. Publisher: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994. This has the 27th edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament. ISBN 1598561790.

Papers, Activities and Assignments: (Maximum points available = 700)

- A. **Read** the poetical books (Job – Song of Songs + Lamentations) **Twice** during the course: 100 points.
- B. **Read** Alter, Boice and Garrett, as well as articles assigned (e.g., *NIDOTTE* IV: 1198-1211): 100 points. On April 25, you will turn in a 3x5 card with your name, the percentage of reading completed, and your signature. A recommended pace is found in the course schedule.
- C. **Hebrew Mid-term** Mar. 9, consisting of grammatical tagging, translating and exegetical notes (covering Pss. 8, 19, 22, I Sam. 2 and Prov. 5) 100 points. This will be explained in the first session.
- D. Poetry Exegesis paper (**ExPap**): 200 points. Write a Twelve-Step ExPap according to the format in *OTE*. This paper will be a student-selected exegesis approved by the instructor. Approval of the pericope is Feb. 8, (Feb. 15, you will discuss your 600-level ExPap in class) and the bibliography and steps 1-5 are due in **draft Mar. 16**. **Final ExPap is due Apr. 11** (Apr. 4 for graduating seniors), typed in the correct form (Times New Roman, 12 point font, one inch margins), no less than 15 pages and no more than 35 pages double-spaced, including sermon outline and footnotes. A handout will be provided for format. Select from the following passages (or appeal for an alternate):

Job 3:3-7	Job curses the day of his birth
Psalms 57:7-11	I will sing and make Melody
Psalms 90:1-4	A prayer of Moses, the Man of God
Psalms 121:1-5	My help comes from the LORD
Psalms 150:1-6	Halleluia – Praise the LORD
Ecclesiastes 11:1-4	Cast your bread upon the water
Isaiah 5:1-7	The Love song of the vineyard

- E. **Recitations** of grammatical tagging, translation, and exegetical notes on passages in poetry: 100 points. You will get at least 5 opportunities to demonstrate your skills in class.
- F. **Hebrew Final** and **Memory Examination** for specified verses from poetry on Apr. 25: 100 points. The final exam covers Isa. 11-12; Song 7; Eccl. 9; Job 31 and Lam. 5. Memory work may be in any version; double credit for Hebrew or Greek memory.
- G. **Class attendance:** *Minus* 25 points for each class missed or 10 points for arriving 15 minutes late or leaving class early. If you absolutely must miss one class for non-adjustable personal or professional

reasons, you may make up this 25 points with an extra assignment approved by the instructor in advance. This assignment will be turned in no later than Apr. 18, the penultimate day of the course.

- H. **Elevation for ThM-level** may be done with instructor's permission. This is normally offered to enrolled ThM students who have completed an OT-700 level course. Elevated students will read an additional thousand pages, do an analysis of Stuart's *OTE*, and an additional 10-12 page biblical theology of a poetic pericope they select (instructor approved).

Course Grading (Based on Percentage of Points)

For a description of grades see the GCTS Student Handbook.

	87%—89%	= B+	77%—79%	= C+	67%—69%	= D+	
94%—100%	= A	84%—86%	= B	74%—76%	= C	64%—66%	= D
90%—93%	= A-	80%—83%	= B-	70%—73%	= C-	60%—63%	= D-
						59%—Below	= F

Incomplete Coursework Policy:

Students are expected to submit all work by the dates set by the course instructors and complete all course requirements on or before the last day that written work is due.

The grade 'Incomplete' is temporary and will be granted only in unusual circumstances (such as serious illness or critical emergencies) and will not be considered for a student who is simply behind in the assignments.

No Incomplete will be granted automatically. The student is responsible to submit the Incomplete Contract to the Registrar in accordance with the Student Handbook, p. 66. The date for completion of the work will be arranged with the professor involved, but that date cannot extend beyond one semester. Special appeals regarding a student's eligibility to receive the Incomplete shall be referred to the Judicial Committee.

Attendance: Regular and on-time class attendance is a necessary part of the learning experience. Meeting the objectives for this course depends heavily on class participation from all students. Absences beyond one class period (or equivalent) will result in a grade reduction, and **students who miss more than five of the thirty-three hours may not expect to pass the course.** See Student Handbook, p. 57.

Plagiarism and Cheating: My undergraduate experience was shaped by a direct honor code: students "will not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do." The tenets of ethical behavior were spelled out in exhaustive detail with hundreds of pages devoted to ensuring an ethical workplace. In a seminary of people submitting to the LORD, we must be especially attentive to matters of honesty and integrity. Ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism or cheating is not an excuse. Computers and electronic Bibles or other electronic devices are not permitted during any examination, (Student Handbook, p. 60).

Disabilities: Any student, who because of a disability may require some special arrangements to meet course requirements, should contact the instructor or the Access Coordinator for the GCTS Office of Disability Services as soon as possible to discuss reasonable accommodations, (Student Handbook, pp. 61-62). Counseling for personal issues is handled by professional counselors, (Student Handbook, p. 25).

Course Bibliography

Please refer to the website www.denverseminary.edu/dj/articles02/0100/0101.php for a helpfully annotated OT bibliography.

Course Schedule

Note: Homework to Prepare for First Class:

1. Read Job – Song + Lamentations completely through in your own first-language edition.
2. Read Alter, pp. 3-84; Boice, pp. 66-73 and 160-175.
3. Review sample ExPaps on reserve at the Jackson Library.

Feb. 1, Wednesday: First Class – Exegesis of Psalms 8 and 19

Class-time:

1. Introduction to Course and Class in order to finalize the syllabus.
2. **Competency exam** based on the Hebrew of Psalms 8 and 19.
3. Discussion of the readings, ExPap, and superscriptions in the Psalter
4. Discussion of *OTE* Step 11 – “Secondary Literature” (Bib.) e.g., *OTE*, pp. 29-30,61-62, 152-175.
5. Introduction to grammatical tagging, translating and exegetical notes.

Homework to Prepare for Next Class:

1. Begin reading completely through the poetry a second time in your own first-language edition.
 2. Memorize Psalm 8. Read Alter, pp. 111-136 and Boice, pp. 190-205.
 3. Consider topic for ExPap (see above under “required assignments”)
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Feb. 8, Wednesday: - Second Class – Exegesis of Psalm 22 (Competency Exam Re-sit)

Class-time:

1. **Competency exam Re-sit**
2. Recite grammatical tagging, translation, and exegetical notes for Pss. 8, 19 and 22
3. Lecture and Discussion of Psalm 22 – “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”
4. *OTE* Steps 1 and 2 – “Text” and “Translation.” Gain approval for poetry ExPap pericope.

Homework to Prepare for Next Class:

1. Tag and translate I Sam 2:1-10. Read Alter, pp. 204-214.
 2. Memorize Psalm 19. Prepare to discuss your OT600-level ExPap in class Feb. 15.
 3. Commence diligent work on steps 1-5, 11 ExPap. Recite Hebrew Poetry on Valentine’s Day!
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Feb. 15, Wednesday: Third Class – Exegesis of I Samuel 2:1-10

Class-time:

1. Recite grammatical tagging, translation, and exegetical notes for I Sam 2:1-10
2. Lecture and Discussion on the books of I&II Samuel
3. *OTE* steps 3 and 4 “Historical and Literary Contexts”
4. “Show and Tell” on your own 600-level ExPap

Homework to Prepare for Next Class:

1. Finish initial work on “text” and “translation” of your ExPap topic
 2. Read Alter, pp. 163-184 and Garrett, pp. 235-252.
 3. Tag and translate Prov. 5.
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Reading Week # 1 Feb. 20-24, **No Class** Feb. 22. Read NIDOTTE IV: 1198-1211 (Naudé on Sex!)

Feb. 29, Wednesday: Fourth Class – Exegesis of Proverbs 5

Class-time:

1. Lecture and Discussion of Theology of Proverbs
2. *OTE* steps 5-6 “Form” and “Structure”
3. Re-enact Prov. 5 Warnings against Adultery; Review Sexual Ordinances.

Homework to Prepare for Next Class:

1. Tag and translate Isa. 11-12. Read Alter, pp. 137-162.
 2. Diligent work on ExPap (Six of the Twelve-Steps to be submitted to Jim by Mar. 16)
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Mar. 9, Wednesday: Fifth Class – Exegesis of Isaiah 11-12

Class-time:

1. **Mid-term exam** covering Psalms 8, 19, 22; I Sam 2 and Prov 5
2. Recite grammatical tagging, translation, and exegetical notes for Isa. 11-12
3. *OTE* Steps 7-8 “Grammatical” and “Lexical Data”

Homework to Prepare for Next Class:

1. Tag, translate and prepare exegetical comments on Song of Songs 7.
 2. Read Alter, pp. 185-203 and Garrett, pp. 347-432.
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Mar. 16, Wednesday: Sixth Class – Exegesis of Song of Songs 7

Class-time:

1. Discuss Mid-term results, including strategies for remediation
2. Recite grammatical tagging, translation, and exegetical notes for Song. 7
3. *OTE* Steps 9-10 “Biblical Context” and “Theology”
4. Yeshiva discussion of Poetry ExPap progress. Submit 50% of ExPap in class.

Homework to Prepare for Next Class:

1. Tag, translate and prepare exegetical comments on Eccl. 9.
 2. Read Garrett, pp. 281-346.
 3. Continue refining ExPap (Due at beginning of class Apr. 11, graduating seniors Apr. 4)
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Reading Week # 2 Mar. 26-30, **No Class** Mar. 28 (ExPap due for graduating seniors Apr. 4)

Mar. 28, Wednesday: Snow Day + Designated students (unsatisfactory 50% ExPap or mid-terms)

Apr. 4, Wednesday: Seventh Class – Exegesis of Ecclesiastes 9

Class-time:

1. Recite grammatical tagging, translation, and exegetical notes for Eccl. 12
2. OTE Step 12 “Application” and One-Page Sermon Outline. Seniors submit ExPap.

Homework to Prepare for Next Class:

Tag, translate and prepare exegetical comments on Job 31:24-40. Read Alter, pp. 85-110.

Apr. 11, Wednesday: Eighth Class – Exegesis of Job 31

Class-time:

1. Submit **ExPap** at beginning of class
2. Recite grammatical tagging, translation, and exegetical notes for Job 31:24-40; re-enact Job 1&2.

Homework to Prepare for Next Class:

1. Review Memory work and prepare for final reading report due Apr. 25
 2. Tag, translate and prepare exegetical comments on Lamentations 5
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Apr. 18, Wednesday: Ninth Class – Exegesis of Lamentations 5

Class-time:

1. Recite grammatical tagging, translation, and exegetical notes for Lamentations 5
2. Discussion of ExPap

Homework to Prepare for Next Class:

Prepare for final exam, memory exam and reading report

Apr. 25, Wednesday: Tenth Class – Final Exam (Isa. 11/12; Song 7; Eccl. 9; Job 31 and Lam. 5)

1. **Final Exam; Memory Exam** of Psalm 8 or 19 (double credit for Greek or Hebrew)
2. Submit Reading reports on 3x5 cards