OT 770 Old Testament Poetry and Wisdom Books

Fall, 2012

Prof. Michael L. Brown

Sept. 7-8; Oct. 5-6; Nov. 2-3

1. PURPOSE: An in-depth study of selected portions of the poetry and wisdom books in Hebrew, with the goal of developing and improving exegetical and interpretive skills. Topics to be covered include the nature of biblical Hebrew poetry; medieval and modern approaches to Hebrew parallelism; the unique aspects of proverbial literature; textual criticism and exegesis; how philology and exegesis influence theology.

2. PREREQUISITES: OL 502; a 600-level OT exegesis course

3. SCHEDULE

Friday, Sept. 7: Contrasting Prose and Poetry: Job 1-3 (with special attention to Job 3; the first two chapters do not need to be prepared in Hebrew)

Saturday, Sept. 8: The Components of Hebrew Poetry: Psalms 2; 24; 103; 150

Recommended reading for lectures: Kugel, The Idea of Biblical Poetry, and Berlin, Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism, should be read as time allows before the first weekend of classes; Kugel must be completed before the second weekend of classes and Berlin before the third weekend of classes; also Murphy, Wisdom Literature, 14-23.

Friday, Oct. 5: Literary Devices of Hebrew Poetry: Psalms 19; 29; 100

Saturday, Oct. 6: Primary Genres of Hebrew Poetry: Psalm 1; 8; 38; 45; Lamentations 1

Recommended reading for these lectures: Be sure to have completed Kugel by Friday.

Friday, Nov. 2: Literary Features of Hebrew Proverbs: Proverbs 25

Saturday, Nov. 3: A Journey into the World of Hebrew Gnomic Literature: Proverbs 3; 10; Ecclesiastes 12

Recommended reading for these lectures: Murphy, Wisdom Literature, 2-12, 48-53, 126-31, and the relevant sections for all texts that will be exegeted in class; Berlin should be completed by this Friday.

4. REQUIREMENTS

a) Attendance in all lectures, with all relevant Hebrew texts prepared for each class; class participation makes up 15% of the grade

b) Required textbooks must be read in full, along with the specified pages of the books on reserve; this counts for 10% of the course. (Please note that the readings recommended for each lecture are for the
purpose of giving a timeline for maximum benefit in each class. All textbooks must ultimately be read in full, along with the specified pages of the books on reserve.) A reading report will be handed out in class. The reading report must be stapled to your final paper and submitted with it. Reading reports submitted late will not receive full credit, but will receive proportional credit at the discretion of the professor.

d) A 15 page exegesis paper, on a topic to be assigned in class. It must include your own translation of each passage treated, along with a detailed exegesis of each passage, followed by conclusions on the larger theological themes. The paper counts 75% of the course grade. It is due on December 3, 2012 and must be sent to the Registration Office, attention Trish King. This assignment NOTE: there will be a 1/3 grade penalty per day for papers submitted late without an approved extension.

5. REQUIRED TEXTS


6. REQUIRED TEXTS ON RESERVE (to be read in full unless otherwise noted)


7. RECOMMENDED TEXTS ON RESERVE


