Syllabus

OT 770  Old Testament Poetical Books

Fall, 2013    Tuesdays, 2-5 PM    Prof. Stuart

Office Hours M, through 9:45-11:00 AM    Phone: 646-4095 Home: 978 372-2351; dstuart@gcts.edu

Syllabus subject to change. Changes will be announced to the class as promptly as possible.

Pre-requisite: 600-level OT exegesis course (passing grade) and passing of Hebrew competency test.
Minimum time require for an average student to get a C in this course is likely to be 120 hours.
Grade averages are figured on a 100 point scale (90-92.4 = A-; 92.5-97.4 = A; 97.5-100 = A+; etc.)

Required Texts:
B. Anderson, Out of the Depths. 3d ed. (Westminster John Knox)
F. I. Andersen, Job. Tyndale OT Commentaries. (Intervarsity)
D. Garrett, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon. NAC. (Broadman-Holman)

Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia

Recommended Texts (the 600 level content of these books is assumed in the course):
E. Brotzman, Old Testament Textual Criticism (Baker)
R. Soulen, Handbook of Biblical Criticism, 2d/3d. ed. (Westminster/John Knox)
D. Stuart, Old Testament Exegesis, 3d. ed. (Westminster/John Knox)
G. Fee and D. Stuart, How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth., 2d. ed. (Zondervan)

Th.M. Elevation: To elevate this course to a 900-level, you must get prior approval from the director of the Th.M. program and by petition on a proper form from the Registration Office. You must then do all the coursework as prescribed in this syllabus and, in addition, write a special research paper on a topic relevant to the course, approved by the professor, of at least ten pages, showing extensive bibliographic consultation (usually a minimum of two dozen sources with good representation of periodical literature, not just books and commentaries) from at least 1000 pages of additional reading beyond what the syllabus requires. If any part of the paper cites or discusses biblical texts in English rather than Hebrew, Greek or other appropriate languages, you will be graded down substantially.

Th.M. Writing Course use: To make this course the one in which you write your Th.M. “major research paper” you must get prior approval as required by petition on a proper form from the Registration Office and/or the director of the Th.M. program. You must do all the coursework as prescribed in this syllabus and also, instead of the usual more limited exegesis paper, write a more extensive exegesis paper, following the same instructions but clearly labeled “Th.M. Major Research Paper,” at least 40 pages in length (that’s a bare minimum; it may need to be substantially longer), with extensive bibliographic consultation (usually a minimum of about forty sources with good representation of periodical literature, not just books and commentaries, and extensive footnotes interacting with the secondary literature). The paper must be a Hebrew exegesis paper throughout. If any part of the paper cites or discusses biblical texts in English rather than Hebrew, Greek or other appropriate languages, you will be graded down substantially.

Major Integrative Paper (M.A. requirement for students for whom English is a second language, in place of a summative evaluation): Prior approval required by petition to the professor. The paper must be at least 25 pages in length, and written and submitted entirely in addition to all other course requirements described in this syllabus. (It does not substitute for any course requirement and is not graded as part of any course’s grade.)

If you obtain permission to write it for me, it must be written on one of the following topics only:
  a. An evaluation of the influence of the Old Testament on Christian theology as seen in specific examples over the span of Church history.
  c. Misunderstandings of the Old Testament that have resulted in problems for denominations or movements as indicated in the writings of leaders of those movements.
Course objectives:

1. To help continue building your knowledge of Hebrew toward making it a useful tool for you in ministry.
2. To help develop your ability to analyze poetical passages, including their composition, structure, vocabulary, etc. so that you can more effectively preach expository and teach systematically on such passages.
3. To enhance your ability to exegete poetical passages so as to apply their truths accurately in preaching and teaching, with the goal of building the faith and practice of those to whom you minister.
4. To provide you with some exposure to the general content of the poetical books with attention to their proper use in ministry.
5. To give you practice, via a modified case-study manner, in the analysis of specific passages for the purpose of working towards reasonable mastery of exegetical methodology.
6. To increase your comprehension of the terminology necessary for intelligent use of secondary literature relative to OT study.
7. To increase your understanding of common hermeneutical errors with the hope that you will learn to avoid them.
8. To help you understand how OT exegesis relates to worship and other Christian responsibilities.
9. To help you see that the Bible was just as foreign to its contemporary cultures as it is to ours.

Note: With regard to its usefulness for preaching, this course is designed to help those seeking to preach expository sermons, and will therefore be of lesser use to those seeking to preach other types of sermons.

ASSIGNMENTS and grading information:

1. HEBREW COMPETENCY TEST  First Day of Class. You must pass this test (at least 60 out of 100 points) to continue in the course. It is graded p/f. It contains sections on vocab, parsing, and translating sentences. It is not based on any specific OT text. Prepare for it by reviewing Hebrew grammar and vocabulary.

2. EXAM #1  25% of course grade. First half of exegetical terms in Stuart, OTE; first nine hermeneutical fallacies in Stuart, OTE; reading to date; Hebrew text assignments up to and including the week before the exam; class lectures. No books or aids allowed. Bring a clean BHS to the exam; no other aids.

3. EXAM #2  25% of course grade. Remaining exegetical terms; remaining hermeneutical fallacies; reading to date; Hebrew text assignments as of and since the date of the first exam; class lectures. No books or aids allowed. Bring a clean BHS to the exam; no other aids.

4. HEBREW EXEGESIS PAPER [including, at the very end, a special one-page sermon outline] on a passage of your choosing from one of the Poetical Books. Recommended length of passage: 4-6 verses. Choose a passage that has at least three text issues associated with it as seen in BHS. Due last date for submission of written work, 4:00 PM. [Graduating senior papers are due earlier.] This paper requires special text and translation footnotes, regular footnotes, and a full bibliography. Value: 50% of course grade. Please be careful to follow the directions, unless you don’t care about your grade.

5. Class attendance and participation (mainly responding to questions) variable, up t 10%. Persons who attend full class sessions and participate competently will usually earn this 10% easily.

6. Important note: As the catalog states, you must demonstrate adequate competence in both Hebrew language and in exegetical method in order to pass the course, regardless of your grades on assignments 1-5 above. If you fail to demonstrate Hebrew and/or exegesis competence in any aspect of the course, including the
Hebrew competency test, you cannot receive a passing grade or credit. Naturally, cheating, plagiarism and other breaches of academic propriety will also result in failure. Please be sure to read the seminary statement on plagiarism.

LATE WORK/EXTENSIONS PRIOR TO LAST DAY FOR SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK:
Basic concept: fairness to those who make the sacrifices to get their work in on time, not a desire to hurt anyone. Fairness requires that everyone have essentially the same amount of time to complete the assignments.

- True unavoidable emergency, including illness: no penalty as long as simple written request is made and approved and lateness does not exceed actual time lost by reason of the emergency.
- Late work otherwise: 1/2 point per 1/2 week is deducted.
- Late work at the end of the session (after THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK) can not be accepted by the professor, but must be submitted directly to the Registration Office after approval of your petition for an extension. The Registration Office may assign additional penalties to those assigned by the course professor.

- There are sample OT 770 exegesis papers online via CAMS, and in hard copy in the professor’s office for you to borrow (one week limit). Consult at least two sample papers as your write your own paper.

- You can see if I preach what I practice at Linebrook Church, Ipswich, most Sundays (Linebrook.org).

Class Schedule

Some adjustment in dates and/or content may be made. The Bible texts assigned are all from the Hebrew. They should be prepared via the 12 steps, and will be dealt with in a modified case study manner during class.

9/10 Class #1  HEBREW COMPETENCY TEST, Introduction, overview. prosody practice.

9/17 Class #2  Week's text: Psalm 3. Review Stuart (OTE) Read "Poetry, Hebrew" by N. Gottwald in the Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible. Read Anderson 1-96. Read Brotzman if you didn't learn OT text critical method well in your 600-level course. Lecture: Psalms

9/24 Class #3  Week's text: Prov 31:10-31. Review exegetical and hermeneutical definitions in OTE appendices. Read Fee and Stuart on Wisdom/Proverbs. Lecture: Proverbs

10/1 Class #4  Week's text: Jonah 2:3-10. Read Anderson 97-176.

10/8 Class #5  Week's text: Psalm 82. Finish reading Anderson.

[10/15]  [NO CLASS: READING WEEK ASSIGNMENT: Read Garrett generally; do draft of text, translation, grammar and lexical sections of exegesis paper.]


10/29 Class #7  Exam #1  Week's text: Song of Solomon 5:10-16; 6:4-9. Read Garrett on Song. Lecture: Song of Solomon. Exam covers everything up to and including last class. Thus, exam does not cover Song of Solomon. (It will be covered on Exam #2.) You must pass
the Hebrew parts of this exam in order to pass the course.


[11/12]  [NO CLASS: READING WEEK ASSIGNMENT: Draft of form, structure, historical and literary sections of exegesis paper]

11/19  Class #9  Week's text: Job 31:24-40. Lecture: Job. Read F. Anderson on Job.

11/26  Class #10  Week's text: Lamentations 5. Lecture: Lamentations.

12/3    Papers due by 4:00 PM for January graduates

12/10  Exam #2 [Final Exam]  Exam will cover everything after first exam including Song of Solomon passage. See official exam schedule for time and date. You must pass the Hebrew parts of this exam in order to pass the course.

12/17  Papers due by 4:00 PM for non-January graduates. Last day for written work. See lateness policy above. After this date, you cannot submit your paper to me. You must submit it to the Registration Office. They may assign you a penalty if your paper is late, and it may be severe. Your paper must be a Hebrew (not an English) exegesis paper in order to fulfill the course requirements.

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### The Exegesis Paper

Please read the following initial advice on the paper:

These features must be characteristic of your paper/sermon outline. Please also use the paper checklist as you work on your paper.

1. Write it on any poetical book passage other than those studied in class.
2. Pick a passage or portion thereof of 4-6 verses if possible (longer passages involve risks).
3. A paper usually needs to be at least 20 pages; no actual limit but penalty for either inadequacy or fluff.
4. Include footnotes (not endnotes) and a full, unpadded, bibliography (see below).
5. Organize and title its parts according to the 12 steps (not sub-steps) of the exegesis process (The secondary literature step shows in the footnotes, the quality of the paper, and most visibly in the bibliography.) The paper should have no more than eleven sections plus the secondary literature step as described above. Appendices are ok.
6. Make sure it is a Hebrew exegesis. Cite and discuss the Hebrew and other original languages. Do not cite and discuss the English. An English exegesis paper, no matter how well done, simply cannot receive a passing grade, and therefore the course grade would not be passing, either.
7. Submit it without a cover or binder (but with a title page), stapled in upper l.h. corner.
8. Put your name and box # on title page but not elsewhere. (I fold the title page over to try to avoid favoritism. Therefore I will not know if your native language is not English [see below]).
9. In step one, reconstruct the Hebrew text, consonants only, thus approximating the original, and be sure it's handwritten (no Xeroxes of BHS or computer printouts), in poetic format if appropriate [with spacing between couplets and triplets, etc.] followed immediately by your text-critical notes (typed). Please don't cite
as complete or repeat the BHS notes; they are abbreviated, partial and selective, and often wrong. When some or all of the information in a given BHS note is correct, you can use it, but don't just copy it into your own notes. Write your own notes in full sentences and explain to the reader what's going on. Don't cite the BHS notes as an authority. Just state the facts.

10. In step two, provide your own original typed English translation, in poetic format also, followed immediately by your translation notes (typed).

11. Use a raised letter system for both the text and translation notes. If you don't know what that means, please carefully consult a couple of the sample papers for how to do it.

12. Use either footnotes otherwise in the paper (regular footnoting system), i.e. in all steps after the first two.

13. Your bibliography should be full (all non-obvious articles and books that you used, even if you didn't use them all that much or didn't get much out of them) but should not be padded (keep to a minimum the obvious things like study Bibles, Bibles, English Bible versions, the BHS, the LXX, concordances, etc. Everybody knows you used these, so there's no point in putting them in your bibliography.) Of course, you should include all commentaries you consulted and anything you quote from.

14. Add a one-page (single spacing allowed) sermon outline at the very end, after the paper's bibliography, with sufficient detail in it so that the reader understands clearly how you would handle the passage in a sermon. A skimpy outline will hurt your grade. The outline style used in GCTS preaching courses is welcome but not specifically required. Be sure your outline reflects your exegetical results.

15. Please consult at least two sample papers for guidance if you have any doubts whatever about how to do this assignment. You probably haven't done a full Hebrew exegesis paper before and there's good wisdom in looking over two or more of them before trying to write your own.

16. If you have not had opportunity in your past education to learn how to write a clear and cogent research paper --and many people have not--you will need to accept as cheerfully as you can the possibility that your exegesis paper will lose grade points by reason of one or more failures to follow proper research paper form and style, or inability to express yourself clearly and get across what you are trying to say. Inability to express yourself well in writing is also a disadvantage in the pastorate, so it is wise to deal with this issue now.

SPECIAL NOTE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: If English is not your first language, you should feel free to have one or more persons who know English well read your outline and correct the grammar and style (but nothing else, in order to be fair). Otherwise you may lose grade points for incorrect expression of what you are trying to say. Warning: Not all native-born American seminarians speak or write grammatical English. If you choose someone to help you, be sure he or she knows how to write grammatical English.

HEBREW EXEGESIS OUTLINE CHECKLIST. IGNORE AT YOUR PERIL.

ACCURACY CHECK: Did you:

1. Use proper form exactly on notes, bibliography, citations, quotations, etc.?
2. Transliterate properly using diacritical marks throughout?
3. Present a reconstructed "original" Hebrew text in your own hand, rather than Xeroxing the BHS page as if it--with its medieval accents, vocalizations, etc.--were original? (Most often it's best not to cite the BHS notes at all, even though you may talk about the information in them, because those notes are only selective, abbreviated pointers to the fuller data.
4. Write your Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek clearly, pointing Hebrew and Aramaic in any cases where ambiguity would otherwise result, and accenting your Greek, etc.?
5. Proofread carefully to eliminate spelling, punctuation and other errors? (It is quite permissible to have others help you proofread.)
6. Put poetry in stichometric form (setting off the couplets and triplets) so that the parallelism is clear both in your text and in your translation?
7. Put your name and box number on the outline (if you want it back)?
8. Write the Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek in all those blanks you left for that purpose?
9. Number all your pages?
10. Staple the outline with title page including name and box # but without cover, binder or folder otherwise?

OVERALL FEATURES CHECK: Did you:

1. Follow the above directions on format?
2. Write an English exegesis or a Hebrew exegesis? (A Hebrew exegesis cites, refers to, and works from the Hebrew text throughout. Lengthy quotations are an exception, and English may be used for these where the wording of the original is not the issue.)
3. Keep quotes from and references to the secondary literature mainly in the notes, so that the text of your outline is your work, not someone else's?
4. Avoid referring to the BHS or BH\(^3\) footnotes, as if they were authoritative; instead stating the textual data in your own words and evaluating it in your own words?
5. Check the ancient versions yourself rather than relying on what commentators and notoriously incomplete Hebrew Bible footnotes tell you? (Citing the BHS notes, especially as if they were an accepted "authority," is unwise.)
6. Keep your bibliography "honest," leaving out obvious sources (lexicons, versions, etc.) or simplistic sources (Bible handbooks, interlinears, etc.).
7. Turn in a copy legible enough? (Faint photocopies, poor quality dot matrix printouts, etc. make a poor impression.)
8. Argue technically, cogently, step-by-step, for your application or just present a trite or subjective application characterized by assertion but not by good, technical argumentation?

MISCELLANEOUS CHECK: Did you know the following?:

1. In typing, a dash is represented by -- (two hyphens) and a hyphen by - .
2. Foreign words including Latin transliterated into English and in English script must be underlined or italicized.
3. "It's" means "it is," whereas "its" means "belonging to it".
4. Author and article title should be included in a bibliography entry on an article in a dictionary or encyclopedia.
5. The following words are correctly spelled: Pharaoh, Nineveh, Isaac, parallelism, Habakkuk, Solomon, Ezekiel, Elisha, suzerain, Zerubbabel, Yahwistic, Jeroboam, synonymous.
6. "Israeli" refers only to a citizen of Israel after 1947 AD and "Jew" only to a religious/ethnic group after 586 BC. Israelite or Judean or Judahite, as appropriate, are the terms to use for God's people before 586 BC.