OT 750 Old Testament Prophetic Books

**Syllabus** (subject to adjustment)  Fall, 2008  Tuesdays 1:15-4:15 PM  Prof. Stuart

Office hours: M, T, W, Th, 10:30-12 plus quick questions anytime.  Office: 122 Goddard Library x4095  Home: 978-372-2351  dstuart@gets.edu

**Required Texts:**


*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*

**Recommended Texts (the 600-level content of these books is assumed in the course):**

E. Brotzman, *Old Testament Textual Criticism* (Baker)


G. Fee and D. Stuart, *How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth*, 3d. ed. (Zondervan)

**Course pre-requisite:** A 600-level OT Hebrew exegesis course from approved list, completed and passed.

**Course objectives:** ability to analyze prophetic oracles, including their composition, structure, vocabulary, etc.; ability to exegete prophetic texts so as to apply their truths accurately in preaching and teaching; exposure to the general content of the prophetical books with attention to their proper use in pastoral ministry; analysis of specific passages for the purpose of mastering exegetical methodology; comprehension of the terminology necessary for intelligent use of secondary literature relative to the prophets; understanding of common hermeneutical errors.

**Th.M. Elevation:** To elevate this course to a 900-level, you must get prior approval by petition on a proper form from the Registration Office. You must then do all the coursework as prescribed 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) that shows at least 1000 pages of additional reading beyond what the syllabus has. If any part of the paper quotes, assumes or discusses biblical texts in English rather than Hebrew, Greek or other appropriate languages, you will be graded down substantially. If it does so regularly, you may not receive a passing grade for the paper or the course.

**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 and, 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 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 quotes, assumes or discusses biblical texts in English rather than Hebrew, Greek or other appropriate languages, you will be graded down substantially. If it does so regularly, you may not receive a passing grade for the paper or the course.

**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 (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 I require that it be written on one of the following topics:

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.

You can see if I preach what I practice at Linebrook Church, Ipswich, at 9:45, 11:00 AM and 5:30 PM Sundays (linebrook.org)

ASSIGNMENTS and grading information:

1. HEBREW COMPETENCY TEST First thing, first class. You must pass this quiz (at least 60 out of 100 points) to continue in the course. It is graded p/f. It contains sections on vocabulary, parsing and reading. There are no special texts to study in advance. Just review your Hebrew grammar and vocabulary. A sample test is posted on my office bulletin board and online in the course information.

2. QUIZ #1. 25% of course grade. First half of exegesis definitions from OTE 3d ed., pp 171-175; first nine hermeneutical errors, from OTE 3d ed., pp 177-179; reading to date; Hebrew text assignments through prior class; class lectures. Lexicons not allowed. Bring a clean Hebrew Bible to the quiz.

3. QUIZ #2. 25% of course grade. Second half of exegesis definitions from OTE 3d ed., pp 171-175; final nine hermeneutical errors, from OTE 3d ed., pp 177-179; reading to date; Hebrew text assignments since class prior to Quiz #1; class lectures. Lexicons not allowed. Bring a clean Hebrew Bible to the quiz.

4. HEBREW EXEGESIS PAPER and sermon outline on a passage not used for class of your choosing from one of the Prophetical Books. Recommended length of passage: 4-6 verses. Choose a passage that has at least three text issues associated with it. Due Dec. 16, 4:00 PM. (Graduating seniors may have an earlier date set by the Registration Office.) This is a full Hebrew exegesis paper with a full bibliography, footnotes, etc. Value: 50% of course grade. Please be careful to follow the directions. All papers must be submitted in hard copy. No email submissions allowed. If you live far from campus you may submit your paper by mail as long as it is postmarked by Dec 16. The sermon outline can be 1-2 pages, as an appendix at the end. It should be detailed enough that I can understand what the sermon would contain.

4. Class participation, other than the asking of questions, may affect grade according to the judgment of the professor. Grade scale: 0-59.9 F; 60-69.9 D; 70-79.9 C; 80-89.9 B; 90-100 A. Time required for an average student to earn a grade of B in this course is estimated at 120 hours.

5. Hebrew competence required throughout. 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 1-4 above. If you fail to demonstrate Hebrew and/or exegesis competence in any aspect of the course, including but not limited to the Hebrew competency quiz, you cannot receive a passing grade or credit. Naturally, cheating, plagiarism and other breaches of academic propriety will also result in failure and report to a judicial committee.

LATE WORK/EXTENSIONS PRIOR TO DEC 16
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 Dec 16) cannot 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 can assign heavy penalties for unexcused late work (e.g., a grade per day of lateness).

**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 in advance for each Tuesday (using the 12 steps) and will be dealt with in a modified case study manner during the class.

Tu Sep 9 Class #1 Hebrew Competency Quiz Introduction Deut 4:25-31 [Hebrew]

Tu Sep 16 Class #2 Hos 2:4-17 [Heb. verses] Review Stuart (OTE) Read NBC on Hosea (Always read at least the introduction section in the NBC for each weekly passage.)

Tu Sep 23 Class #3 Amos 6:1-7 Read NBC on Amos

Tu Sep 30 Class #4 Isa 8:23-9:6 [Heb. verses] Read NBC on Isaiah

Tu Oct 6 Class #5 Joel 2:1-11 Read NBC on Joel

[Tu Oct 14 READING WEEK NO CLASS Assignment: Martens, Chapters 1-8]

Tu Oct 21 Class #6 First Quiz (on everything through Reading Week assignment) Zeph 1:4-13 Read NBC on Zephaniah

Tu Oct 28 Class #7 Jer 29:4-14 Read NBC on Jeremiah

Tu Nov 4 Class #8 Ezek 19:1-14 Read NBC on Ezekiel

[Tu, Nov 11 READING WEEK NO CLASS Assignment: Martens, Chapters 9-17]

Tu Nov 18 Class #9 Dan 10:1-21 Read NBC on Daniel

[Tu Nov 25 NO CLASS SBL meetings in Boston; students encouraged to attend]

Tu Dec 2 Class #10 Hag 2:10-19 Read NBC on Haggai

W, Th or F, Dec 10-12 Second Quiz At the time schedule by Reg. Office as final exam.

Tu Dec 16 Paper/sermon outline due 4:00 PM. Penalties start.
IMPORTANT FOR The Exegesis Paper (700 level, Old Testament)

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING initial advice on the paper:
These features must be characteristic of your paper/sermon outline. Please also use the exegesis paper check list as you work on your paper.

1. Write it on any prophetical 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. Aim for roughly 20-30 pages or so; no actual limit.

4. Include footnotes or end notes as needed 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 (Step twelve appears in notes and bibliography, not as a section otherwise.) The paper should have eleven sections followed by the bibliography and sermon outline.

6. Make sure it is a HEBREW exegesis. 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. Check each step for Hebrew. When you cite and discuss the text, be sure you cite and discuss the Hebrew, not the English.

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 special note below]).

9. In step one, reconstruct the Hebrew text, consonants only, thus approximating the original, and be sure it's handwritten (no photocopies 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 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 if appropriate, 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 is, please find out.

12. Use either footnotes or end notes otherwise in the paper (regular raised number system), i.e. in steps 3-12.

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 (don't include the obvious things like lexicons, Bibles, 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.

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 lower 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 look carefully at the come sample papers posted online 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 wisdom in looking over one 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 of 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 most jobs including the pastorate, by the way.
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 paper 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 grammatically.

HEBREW EXEGESIS PAPER 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 photocopying or printing out 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 use some of 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 paper 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.) Ask yourself as you do each section: Is this a Hebrew exegesis or an English one?
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 BH3 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, interlinear, etc.).
7. Turn in a copy legible enough? (Faint copies, 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 mere 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.