

GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
OT 750 *Old Testament Prophetical Books*
M-F 9am-12pm
Summer III 2010

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978-646- 4243)

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The primary objective of the course is to develop skills to interpret prophetical books from the perspective of the Hebrew text. In addition to building upon exegetical methodology learned at the 600-level, class times will be devoted to an examination of the prophets' main themes against their historical and biblical-theological backdrop.

- Exegetical steps. How to interpret the Hebrew text of the prophets.
- Biblical-theological context. What overarching principles govern the message/approach of the prophets and how Yahweh's character is revealed in the prophets
- Historical context. How the prophets fit within the environment of Iron II Israel and related Near Eastern polities.
- Practical context. Developing skills to preach and teach from OT Hebrew prophetical texts.

Additional notes:

- Course documents (handouts, Powerpoints, etc.) will be available on Cams. It is the student's responsibility to check Cams for announcements, handouts, etc.

INTERNET USAGE

Students are asked to refrain from accessing the internet at any point during class sessions, unless otherwise instructed by the professor. "Surfing the web," checking email, and other internet-based activities are distracting to other students and to the professor, and prevent the student from fully participating in the class session.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

- J.N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah*, 2 vols. (Eerdmans, 1986, 1998)
- A. Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Indiana University, 1985)
- Paul E. Dion, *Hebrew Poetics*, second edition (Benben Publications, 1992)
- W. A. VanGemeren, *Interpreting the Prophetic Word* (Zondervan, 1996)

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

- E.J. Young, *My Servants the Prophets*
- *NIV Archaeology Study Bible*

Please also consult/review these 600-level texts:

- D. K. Stuart, *Old Testament Exegesis*, 4th ed. (Westminster/John Knox, 2009).
- E. R. Brotzman, *Old Testament Textual Criticism* (Baker, 1994).
- R. N. Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, 3rd ed. (Westminster/John Knox, 2001).
- G. Fee and D. Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All its Worth*, 3rd ed. (Zondervan, 2003)

IV. HEBREW COMPETENCY EXAM

All 700-Level students are required to take a Hebrew competency exam that includes translation and parsing. The exam is scheduled for the first day of class (Monday July 19)

Hebrew competency for the course:

Hebrew competency must be demonstrated both in terms of the language and exegetical methodology in order to pass the course, regardless of grades on the two tests and exegesis paper. Thus, if a student fails to demonstrate Hebrew and/or exegesis competence in any aspect of the course, he/she will not be able to receive a passing final grade.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Mid-Term and Final Tests (40%):

Part I: Translation and parsing (with exegetical comments) of a set text covered in class (no lexicon allowed).

Part II: Identification and short essay questions based on the required readings and materials covered in class.

Hebrew Exegesis Paper (minimum of 25 pages; 50% of course grade): Specific guidelines will be made available in class. Students are expected to abide by the academic policies as found in the Student Handbook (re: plagiarism, late assignments, etc.). For style consult *The SBL Handbook of Style*. This is especially important for footnotes and bibliography.

Class Participation (5%): Students need to come to class prepared to discuss (= read, parse, comment on exegetical steps) the assigned texts. Unexcused absences and absences beyond one class session of 3 hours will result in loss of class participation grade (in fairness to those who attend all the classes).

Readings (5%):

- VanGemeren, Berlin and Dion should be read in their entirety
- Select articles on the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 52:13-53:12) (on CAMS)
- The prophets in translation (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc.)
- Regarding Oswalt, the expectation is that students will critically interact (not simply read) with the assigned sections of the commentary.

Students need to submit a written report of the percentage of readings completed.

DUE DATES:

- **Exegesis paper: August 13 4pm**

VI. PREPARATION BEFORE FIRST CLASS

- Review 600-level texts *Old Testament Exegesis* (D. Stuart); *Old Testament Textual Criticism* (Brotzmann)
- Read the prophets in translation (each reading in one sitting)
Note: this reading would fulfill the course requirements of reading the prophets in translation (see above).

VII. CLASS SCHEDULE

Monday July 19 “Prophetic Playbook”

- Prophetic Books: the Big Picture
- Exegetical Method: “The Big Picture of the Book”
- Hebrew competency exam
- Oswalt vol. 1, Introduction pp. 3-76
- Isaiah 1:1-17 (cf. Oswalt)

Tuesday July 20 “Old Zion, New Zion”

- Isa 1:10-31 (cf. Oswalt)
- VanGemeran Part 1
- Method: “Text Criticism and Translation”
- Begin Berlin, Dion

Wednesday July 21 “Exile”

- Isaiah 5:8-30 (cf. Oswalt)
- Method: “Hebrew Syntax of Poetry”
- Begin VanGemeran Part 2

Thursday July 22 “Nations are Accountable”

- Isaiah 13 (cf. Oswalt)
- Method: “Lexical analysis of Poetry: the question of metaphorical language”
- Finish VanGemeran Part 2

NOTE: choice of passage for the exegesis paper is due tomorrow!

Friday July 23 “Heart Problems”

- Jeremiah 17:1-14
- Method: “Structural analysis of Poetry”
- Begin VanGemeran Part 3

Monday July 26

- **Mid-Term Test (90 minutes)**

Tuesday July 27 “Promise of Zion”

- Isa 2:1-4; Isa 19:16-25 (cf. Oswalt)
- Method: “The prophets in OT context”

Wednesday July 28 “Hope”

- Isaiah 40 (cf. Oswalt, vol. 2 Introduction and related materials)
- Method: “The prophets in their cultural environment”
- Finish VanGemeran Part III

Thursday July 29 “Substitutionary Sacrifice”

- Isa 52:13 – 53:1-12 (cf. Oswalt)
- Method: “The prophets in NT context” [focus on Isaiah in Romans]

Friday July 30 “Inaugurated Restoration”

- Haggai 2
- Method: “The Prophets in Theological context”
- “Contextualization” and “Application”

Monday August 2

- **Final Test: 90 minutes**

EXEGESIS PAPERS ARE DUE ON AUGUST 13 at 4 pm (a box will be outside my office)

VIII. BIBLICAL HEBREW SELECT REFERENCE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dictionaries/Concordances

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Holladay, W. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971.

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Hebrew Grammar

Blau, J. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. 2d ed.. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993.

Garrett, D.A. *A Modern Grammar for Classical Hebrew*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2002.

Gesenius, F.W. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. Edited by E. Kautzsch. Translated by A.E. Cowley. 2d ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1910.

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Hebrew Vocabulary

Landes, G. *A Student's Vocabulary of Biblical Hebrew: Listed according to Frequency and Cognate*. 2d ed. SBLRBS 41. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001.

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Hebrew Text

Brotzman, E.R. *Old Testament Textual Criticism*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994.

Kelley, P.H., Mynatt, D.S., Crawford, T.G. *The Masorah of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

Scott, W.R. *A Simplified Guide to BHS*. N.Richland Hills, TX: Bibal, 1987.

Tov, E. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*. 2d ed. Minneapolis: Fortress 2001.

Würthwein, E. *The Text of the Old Testament*. Rev. ed. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1995.

Narrative

Alter, R. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. New York: Basicbooks, 1981.

Fokkelman, J.A. *Reading Biblical Narrative. An Introductory Guide*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1999.

Gunn, D., Fewell, D. *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*. Oxford: Oxford University, 1993.

Miller, C.L. *The Representation of Speech in Biblical Hebrew Narrative: A Linguistic Approach*. Atlanta: Scholars, 1996

Pratt, R.L. *He Gave us Stories*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1990.

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