

Dr. David M. Howard, Jr.
Bethel Seminary
Summer 2008 – OT 502
Sem PM – Mod U-2
Mon 5:30-10:00 pm

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1 SAMUEL – SONG OF SONGS (OT 502)

Catalogue Description

“An examination of the books of 1 Samuel through Song of Songs, including the contents, major themes, and theological messages of each. Special emphasis is placed on the human and divine dimensions of the Kingdom of God, as well as continuity of themes with earlier Scriptures. Special attention also is given to legitimate ways of reading the Bible. This involves understanding the particular qualities of Hebrew poetic and wisdom texts, and developing a valid hermeneutic for interpreting them. Exposure to proper methods of interpreting Old Testament narrative texts is presupposed. Prerequisites: BT501/BI501 and OT501. *St. Paul only. Four hours.*”

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student shall be able to demonstrate

1. A thorough knowledge of the contents of 1 Samuel through Song of Songs.
2. A grasp of the major themes of these books, and how these fit the larger themes of the Old and New Testaments.
3. The basic skills of Biblical exegesis, including the special nature of Hebrew poetic texts.
4. A knowledge of relevant extra-Biblical materials, including a knowledge of their roles in exegesis and apologetics.

In addition, a goal of this course is to stimulate a love and appreciation for these portions of the Old Testament, and their use in Christian ministry.

Required Textbooks

1. *The Bible*. Any modern version is acceptable.
2. David M. Howard, Jr., *An Introduction to the Old Testament Historical Books*. Chicago: Moody, 2007. ISBN: 0-8024-4155-6
3. C. Hassell Bullock, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Poetic Books*. Rev ed. Chicago: Moody, 2007. ISBN: 0-8024-4157-2

Recommended Textbooks

1. Robert B. Chisholm, Jr. *Interpreting the Historical Books: An Exegetical Handbook*. Kregel, 2006. ISBN: 0-8254-2764-9
2. Mark D. Futato, *Interpreting the Psalms: An Exegetical Handbook*. Kregel, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-8254-2765-7

Course Handouts (found in Blackboard under “Course Documents”)

- J. Pritchard, "A Man and His God" (*ANET*, 589-91); "The Babylonian Theodicy" (*ANET*, 601-04).
- S. Carney, "God Damn God: A Reflection on Expressing Anger in Prayer," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* (Oct 1983), 116-20.
- G. Wilson, "The Shape of the Book of Psalms," *Interpretation* 46 (1992), 129-42.

Course Requirements

1. Reading (20%)

- A. The entire contents of the books of 1 Samuel to Song of Songs are to be read, in any version desired. International students may read the Bible in their own language. *Each book must be read at one sitting. This is an essential part of the course experience and may not be waived.*
- B. The corresponding chapters in each textbook are to be read on the days the Biblical books are covered.

Note: All readings must be completed by the beginning of the class period in which they are assigned. Please use the forms online in Blackboard to report your reading.

2. Worksheets (40%)

Eight worksheets are to be completed and submitted under Blackboard by class time on the dates indicated. You should also bring a hard copy to class, since these will be discussed in class. These usually will be on important passages, and most will cover a different aspect of the exegetical task (grammatical, literary, theological, practical, etc.). Because these worksheets will be discussed in class, late submissions are not accepted. (Circumstances that a congregation would accept for a pastor's missing a Sunday sermon may allow for rare exceptions.) The lowest worksheet (or one missed) will be dropped.

3. Exams (40%)

Two unit exams (non-cumulative) will be given, according to the schedule below. These will be out-of-class exams, to be taken in Blackboard. They will cover the Bible reading, textbook readings, worksheets, and class lectures and discussions. Study guides for these exams are posted in

Blackboard, as well as on the “Classes” page of the professor’s Web site.

Grading Summary

Grading Scale

Reading	20%	93-100%	A
Worksheets	40%	86-92%	B
Exam I	20%	78-85%	C
Exam II	<u>20%</u>	70-77%	D
	100%	0 - 69%	F

Note: Because of the obvious educational benefits to oneself, as well as common courtesy to others, regular and on-time class attendance are expected. Unexcused absences beyond two class periods will result in a grade reduction. An average student should expect to invest ca.120 hours in this class in order to achieve an average grade. Individual outcomes, of course, may vary.

COURSE SCHEDULE (OT 502)

NOTE: Every effort has been made to even out the work load week by week, but some weeks' work loads will of necessity be heavier than those of other weeks. There is a pre-course assignment for June 16, and you are encouraged to work ahead beyond that, if at all possible, particularly in reading the Bible portions (as always, in one sitting). Note that the second week's load is especially heavy.

Jun 16 A Course Introduction
B Introduction to Old Testament Historical Narrative
C 1-2 Samuel
D 1-2 Samuel
Read: 1-2 Samuel
Howard, chaps. 1, 5
"The Student, the Fish, & Agassiz" (on the class Web site)
Due: Worksheet 1

Jun 23 A 1-2 Kings
B 1-2 Kings
C 1-2 Chronicles
D 1-2 Chronicles
Read: 1-2 Kings; 1-2 Chronicles
Howard, chap. 6, 7, 8
Due: Worksheets 2, 3

Jun 30 A Ezra-Nehemiah-Esther
B Ezra-Nehemiah-Esther
C Introduction to Hebrew Poetry
D Introduction to the Psalter - I
Read: Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther
Howard, chaps. 9, 10 (Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther)

Jul 7 **NO CLASS: JULY 4 HOLIDAY WEEKEND**

Assignments:

Read: Psalms 1-72, 73-100
Bullock, chap. 4

Work on: Worksheet 4 (discussed in class on July 14)

Take Exam I (covering 1 Samuel – Esther) by July 11

EXAM I Due: July 11

- Jul 14 A Psalm 1
B Introduction to the Psalter - II
C Psalms: Praises
D Psalms: Laments

Read: G. Wilson, "The Shape of the Book of Psalms," *Interpretation* 46 (1992), 129-42;
S. Carney, "God Damn God: A Reflection on Expressing Anger in Prayer," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* (Oct 1983), 116-20.

Due: Worksheets 4, 5, 6

- Jul 21 A Introduction to Wisdom Literature; Wisdom in the Ancient Near East
B Proverbs
C Ecclesiastes; Song of Songs
D Job

Read: "A Man and His God" (*ANET*, 589-91); "The Babylonian Theodicy" (*ANET*, 601-4)
Bullock, chaps. 5, 6, 7, 3

Due: Worksheets 7, 8

Take Exam II (covering Job-Song of Songs) by July 25

EXAM II	Due: July 25
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