



PROPHETIC BOOKS

OT 503 §2

SYLLABUS

SPRING 2010
Th 1-5PM

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The passion of Bethel Seminary is to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ among all people in culturally sensitive ways. As a Spirit-empowered, biblically grounded community of learning, Bethel strives to develop and equip whole and holy persons to serve and lead so that churches and ministry agencies can become all they are called to be and do in the world for the glory of God.

The objectives and assignments of PROPHETIC BOOKS are designed in light of that statement of mission and in light of the degree program aims appropriate to this course. In addition, each member of this learning enterprise is expected to set out personal objectives to pursue in their studies this term.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An investigation into Israel's prophetic literature. While students will be introduced to highlights of recent scholarship on this material, the primary emphasis will be on the persuasive nature of Hebrew prophecy and the content & theology of the prophetic books. Students will build on their Hebrew knowledge and exegetical skills. Attention is given to the application of these biblical texts to current issues in society and your personal life. This course also includes a review of selected issues of Bible introduction. **Prerequisites: BT 501/BI501, OT 521, OT 522, OT551 and OT552** (except for those programs in which OT552 is not required),

Someone has observed that in order to love intimately one must know accurately, else one is loving an image of their own making. Knowing accurately is the function of sound biblical studies.

The classical or "writing" prophets served from the 9th century B.C. through the 5th century, a convulsive time in the ancient world. For the community of the PROPHETIC BOOKS, this period is a tragic one as the "People of God" declined from the "golden age" of David and Solomon to ruin. By now Israel has already been torn in two by civil war. The northern Kingdom of Israel is characterized by unrelenting spiritual rebellion and significant political instability. The southern Kingdom of Judah, led by David's dynasty (except for a six-year break), finds itself on a spiritual "roller-coaster." Yet both kingdoms experience periods of affluence and ease which seems to anesthetize any latent spiritual sensitivity toward the LORD.

On the international scene a "world power" emerges in the last half of the 8th century: the Neo-Assyrian Empire. By 627 the empire encompasses lower Egypt, eastern Turkey, southern Armenia and Azerbaijan, western Iran and everything in between in the Fertile Crescent. Toward the end of the 7th century the Babylonian-Median alliance sacks Nineveh, the Assyrian capital, and by 605 the neo-Babylonian Empire has become the new "superpower." Sixty-six years later she is replaced by the Medo-Persian Empire which extends its world-power West to Libya, Northwest into Bulgaria and Greece, East to Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tadjikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan.

And in the midst of all this, Yahweh demonstrates faithfulness to His Promise and Covenant as He sends His servants the prophets to call His people back to a vital personal relationship from merely a formal one. He commissions His prophets with words of grace and accountability to the nations as well. He commissions the prophets that both Israel and the nations

would “know that I am Yahweh.” And to all, the prophets proclaim the coming Promised One Who alone would effect the blessing promised to Abraham on behalf of all peoples.

This term we get to dig into what it was like to be a spokesperson for Yahweh in challenging times, what these persons were like, what made them tick, what was the essence of their ministry, what was the thrust of their message, how they handled issues of spiritual and social leadership, and what significance their ministry and message has for us in the 21st century *anno Domini*.

COURSE BENEFITS

Upon completion of this course you should be able to

- ✓ state the basic facts with respect to each book's setting, theme, and content. This is essential to the reflection required for teaching and preaching the “whole counsel of God.” As St. Jerome (340?-420AD) claimed in the prologue to his commentary on Isaiah, “ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.”
- ✓ trace and synthesize core theological themes through the Nevi'im in context of Torah and Kethuvim as well as the New Testament. A good facility in biblical theology is essential to “doing” theology in contemporary settings.
- ✓ locate the historical/geographical/cultural setting of main events recorded in this portion of the Hebrew Bible. Whether in the pulpit, study group, or counsellor's office, a clear exposition requires an understanding of the context of revelation.
- ✓ discuss how prophetic discourse was designed to persuade.
- ✓ demonstrate greater skill in interpreting the Scripture (including further developing your facility in Hebrew). This will benefit both you and all those to whom you minister.
- ✓ more effectively and faithfully apply the 77% of Scripture we call the Old Testament in life and ministry. This is critical because the whole Bible really is the Christ-follower's Bible.

COURSE TEXTS

Primary literature:

Bible. (Whichever translation you are comfortable with. International students may use a translation in their mother-tongue) An on-line concordance featuring several biblical translations can be found at:
<http://bible.gospelcom.net>

Secondary literature

Required Text:

Beecher, Willis J. *The Prophets and the Promise*. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2002. (Abbrev. P&P in assignments)
Dillard, Raymond and Tremper Longman. *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 2nd ed.. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006. (Abbrev. IOT in assignments)

Recommended:

Seitz, Christopher, *Goodly Fellowship of the Prophets*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009.

Supplemental resources (not required to purchase; *required reading)

Ferris, Paul W. “Archaeological Data: Prophets” (Background resource for Kaiser, Old Testament Documents)
<http://www.bethel.edu/~pferris/ot103/ArchData/index.htm>
Robinson, Haddon. “The Heresy of Application.” *Leadership Journal* 18 (1997) 20-27.
http://www.bethel.edu/~pferris/ot103/pr_readings.html

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

N.b.: [Guides and resources](#) for these assignments are available on the Prophets website.

- ✓ **READINGS (15%):** You get to dig into primary sources: (Due as assigned (see Agenda). Keep an account of your progress.)
 - ▶ You get to read the entire text of each book of the Prophets (any version) at one sitting. Be looking for how an ancient Israeli believer saw the world. You may want to scan the generic "[Readers Guide](#)" online before you start reading the Prophets.
 - ▶ You get to scan selected extra-biblical texts related to the Old Testament documents.
<http://www.bethel.edu/~pferris/ot103/ArchData/index.htm>

You will also be reading secondary literature:

- ▶ The associated chapters in Dillard & Longman are studied along with your Bible reading;
 - ▶ Ferris' "[Historical Synopsis](#)" for the period of the Prophets;
 - ▶ Beecher's *Prophets & the Promise*, chs 4-11;
 - ▶ Schreiner's "[Preaching & Biblical Theology](#)";
 - ▶ Robinson's "[Heresy of Application](#)";
 - ▶ Seitz's, *Goodly Fellowship of the Prophets*. (extra credit)
- ✓ **ANALYSIS & REFLECTION (15%):** Each week you get to enhance your spiritual development under the discipline of the Word of God through **Personal Application Portfolio** (due toward end of term). In addition to being mini-exegetical exercises, these are intended to *facilitate personal reflection on the texts* we are working with. Be sure they are *personal, specific and practical*. See [guidelines](#) on website.

Assigned passages are:

Isa. 42:5-9 Jer. 7:8-11 Ezk. 3:4-11 Dan. 1:8-21 Amos 5:10-15 Mic. 2:1-5

You also get to engage in a **Case Study** in servant-leadership (see worksheet 10). In addition to submitting this assignment to the course instructor, you are also required to upload your assignment to your Integrative Portfolio. For important uploading instructions, visit your Integrative Portfolio Blackboard course (GS002 or GS003). *This requirement applies to all degree seeking students who initiate their degree program from fall of 2008 forward.*

- ✓ **INTERACTION (5%):** One of the opportunities you have to develop life-long learning skills is your involvement interacting with others' perspectives on issues. You get to interact with others (scholars, ministers, peers, and others) on issues related to the material you are studying by means of readings and [Interactive Reviews](#) as well as Bb discussions. As you interact with these persons, analyze the perspective they bring to the issue, their philosophical and theological presuppositions, evaluate their handling of the evidence, and respond to the conclusions they offer. The fruit of this interaction will be evident in the assigned interactive reviews, in class discussions.

Interactive reviews:

Beecher, *Prophets & Promise* (extra credit discussion)
Robinson, *Heresy*
Seitz, *Fellowship* (extra credit)

Worksheets are intended to pace your study and guide your engagement with reading material. Your engagement with the worksheets is an integral part of your participation in the course of study.

Case Study: You also get to engage with peers in a case study where you will analyze and reflect on issues of personal

and spiritual formation as well as dynamics of leadership (worksheet 10). This is intended as a collaborative effort. on Bb. **N.b.**, *In addition to submitting this assignment to the course instructor, you are also required to upload your assignment to your Integrative Portfolio. For important uploading instructions, visit your Integrative Portfolio Blackboard course (GS002 or GS003). This requirement began in the fall quarter of 2008 and applies to all degree seeking students from that point forward.*

- ✓ INVESTIGATION(25%): You get to engage in an investigation of **Jeremiah 29:1-14** and writing a 2000- 2500 word report (excl. bibliography & appendix) of the results of your investigation. Due as assigned (see Agenda)

This **exegetical paper** will be accompanied by an appendix containing a syntactical layout* or “clause map” with exegetical outline (for an approach refer to W.C. Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology* (esp. syntactical layout. See pp. 99-103, 165-181) and a one page analysis of ways you might preach/teach this passage. Be sure to consult the [Exegetical Paper Guide](#) on the course website)

*We will experiment with clause mapping in class sessions. To this end, you get to prepare a trial clause map of Haggai 1 we will use during our “lab” session on “preaching/teaching the Prophets.”

- ✓ PARTICIPATION (15%): Consistent constructive participation in our common enterprise this term is expected. This involves meaningful interaction both in classroom and on Bb.
- ✓ EXAM (25%): Taken via Blackboard, the exam is designed to assess progress toward realizing the intended Course Benefits as well as your personal objectives. The best preparation for the exam is to keep these objectives in mind as you study throughout the term. See the [Review Guide](#) on the course website.

Submitting Assignments

Class prep assignments (e.g. reading & worksheets) are due at class time. All written assignments are to be submitted at the appropriate place on Blackboard by midnight (Central) of date due unless otherwise indicated.

All written assignments that are submitted as a file must be in either MSWord or WordPerfect format. **N.b.**, the filename given each assignment **must** follow a prescribed protocol. The filename will include *course & sect. number, term, your last name, and assignment name*. For example, your PA portfolio would be named something like **ot503-sec#-sp10-yourlastname-PA**. Documents submitted without this filenamng protocol may not be registered and graded. The exegetical paper will be submitted via *Safe Assignment* on Bb.

N.b., The Seminary Catalog stipulates: “students are expected to submit all work by the dates set by the course instructors and complete all course requirements on or before the last day of the quarter.” Normally late work will not be accepted. (Circumstances that a congregation would accept for postponing a Sunday sermon may be considered with a reduction in grade. Such exceptions may involve a grade reduction. A deduction of 10% will be taken for each day past a published due date, up to five days. Work more than five days late will not be accepted.)

Miscellany:

- Policies: Refer to the seminary catalogue and student handbook for policies that apply to all courses.
- Attendance: Regular engagement in the class is an essential part of the learning enterprise. Being on-time for class is a matter of respect. Unexcused absence or multiple tardiness will result in reduction of grade.
- Digital device use: Digital devices are useful for note-taking and impromptu data searches related to class discussion. Out of respect for your classmates and the financial and time-investment both you and they are making, you are requested not to use these devices for surfing, game-playing, e-mailing, texting, etc. during classtime.
- Etiquette: Phones & beepers must be turned off during class. Misused, however, they can also be a gross distraction to you and your neighbors. Tardiness & inappropriate behavior will result in reduction of grade. Tape

recording is not permitted inasmuch as it can inhibit class participation. Men: hats off to you. ©

- A summary of library resources may be found at http://seminary.bethel.edu/library/biblical_research.htm
- **N.b.:** The professor may modify or otherwise supplement this syllabus and/or class instructions via Blackboard or e-mail. Other course material is available on Blackboard. It is the student's responsibility to avail herself or himself to such resources and check Blackboard and/or their email for such notices.

Grading Rubric: See “Rubric for Assessment” under the “Assignments” tab on the course website.

COURSE SUPPLEMENTAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

Achtemeier, Elizabeth. “Preaching the Prophets with Honor: How to Accurately Present These Overlooked Books.” *Leadership Journal* 18 (1997) 57-59. <http://www.ctlibrary.com/le/1997/fall/714057.html> (subscription)

Adogbo, Michael. “A comparative Analysis of Prophecy in Biblical and African Traditions.” *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 88 (1994): 15-20.

<http://63.136.1.23.ezproxy.bethel.edu/pls/eli/ashow?aid=ATLA0000889290>

Alexander, David and Pat Alexander. *Zondervan Handbook to the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999. (This is especially helpful if one has never read the prophets.)

Arnold, Bill T. and John H. Choi. *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2003.

Bright, John. *Covenant and Promise: The Prophetic Understanding of the Future in Pre-Exilic Israel*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976.

Burrow, Rufus. “Some Characteristics of Biblical Prophecy.” *AME Zion Quarterly Review* 105 (1993): 27-31.

Chisolm, Robert B., Jr. *Handbook on the Prophets*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002 (Abbrev. HP in assignments. Optional but recommended if one has not previously read the prophets.)

Doohan, Helen. “Contrasts in Prophetic Leadership: Isaiah & Jeremiah.” *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 13 (1983): 39-43.

*Habel, Norman. “The Form and Significance of the Call Narratives.” *ZAW* 77 (1965): 297-323.

<http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein/Documents/habel.htm>

*Ferris, Paul W., Jr., “Eye on the Prophets: Visual Outlines of the Prophetic Books.” Unpubl., available on course website: http://www.bethel.edu/~pferris/ot103/pr_eye_on_the_prophets.html

*_____. “Prophecy & Renewal: Historical Synopsis.” Unpubl., available on course website: <http://www.bethel.edu/~pferris/historical/hispass.html> (See Blackboard announcement for login & password)

Joüon, Paul and T. Muraoka. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 2 vols.. Subsidia Biblica 14.1, 2; Pontifical Institute, 1991.

Kaiser, Walter. *The Old Testament Documents*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2001.

_____. *Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament : A Guide for the Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.

_____. *Toward an Exegetical Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981. (Helpful for aspects of the exegetical paper, especially the syntactical layout.)

Katho, Bungishabaku. “Jeremiah 22: Implications for the Exercise of Political Power in Africa,” *Interpreting the Old Testament in Africa*. N.Y.: Lang, p. 153-58.

*Malamat, Abraham. "A Forerunner of Biblical Prophecy." In *Ancient Israelite Religion*, edited by Patrick Miller, Paul Hanson, and S. Dean McBride, 33-52. Phila.: Fortress, 1987.

http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein/Documents/malamat.htm?kbw_ID=37297359

Matthews, Victor. *The Social World of the Hebrew Prophets*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2001.

Miller, Patrick. “Toward a Theology of Leadership.” *Asbury Theological Journal* 47 (1992): 43-50.

Nissinen, Martti (ed). *Prophecy in its Ancient Near Eastern Context: Mesopotamian, Biblical, and Arabian Perspectives*. PANEC. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000.

O'Connor, Kathleen. “The Prophet Jeremiah and Exclusive Loyalty to God.” *Interpretation* 59.2 (Ap 2005) 130-40.

<http://63.136.1.23.ezproxy.bethel.edu/pls/eli/ashow?aid=ATLA0001455228>

Oswalt, John. “The Book of Isaiah : A Short Course on Biblical Theology” *Calvin Theological Journal* 39 (2004) 54-71. <http://63.136.1.23.ezproxy.bethel.edu/pls/eli/ashow?aid=ATLA0001438513>

- Petuchowski, Jakob. "Faith and Works in the Biblical Confrontation of Prophets and Priests." *Judaism* 39 (1990): 184-191.
<http://proquest.umi.com.ezproxy.bethel.edu/pqdweb?index=0&did=1692069&SrchMode=1&sid=1&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1136434299&clientId=27654>
- Pixley, Jorge. "Isaiah 52:13-53:12: A Latin American Perspective," in *Return to Babel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999, p. 95-100.
- Rasmussen, Carl. *NIV Atlas of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989.
- Robinson, Haddon. *Biblical Preaching*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001. (Helpful for the homiletical appropriation element of the research paper.)
- * _____. "The Heresy of Application." *Leadership Journal* 18 (1997) 20-27.
<http://www.ctlibrary.com/le/1997/fall/714020.html> (by subscription) (obtainable via interlibrary loan)
- Schrieber, Paul. "Liberation Theology and the O.T.: an Exegetical Critique." *Concordia Journal* 13 (1987): 27-46.
- *Schreiner, Thomas. "Preaching & Biblical Theology," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 10,2 (sum 2006) 20-29.
http://www.sbts.edu/documents/tschreiner/10.2_article.pdf
- Soares-Prabhu, George. "The Prophet as Theologian: Biblical Prophetism as a Paradigm for Doing Theology." *Asia Journal of Theology* 2 (1988): 3-11.
- Stuart, D. *Old Testament Exegesis*. 3rd ed. Philadelphia: Westminster, 2001.
- Walton, John. *The Old Testament Today: A Journey from the Original Meaning to Contemporary Significance*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.
- Waltke, Bruce K. and M. O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990.

Date	Topic	Assignment due (see pp. 3-4)
1 Apr	The Prophets & their times; Hermeneutics of the Prophets;	Worksheets 1,2 (submit via email before class);
8 Apr	Theology of the Prophets	Read <i>P&P</i> chs 4-11 (Post Interactive review on Bb) Read Robinson, "Heresy" (Post Interactive review on Bb)
15 Apr	Isaiah	Scan <i>Historical Synopsis</i> for context of Isaiah; Read: Isaiah 1-66 + <i>IOT</i> ; Worksheet 3
22 Apr	Jeremiah. Lamentations	Scan <i>Historical Synopsis</i> for context of Jeremiah; Read: Jeremiah 1-52 + <i>IOT</i> ; Worksheets 4,5 Scan <i>Historical Synopsis</i> for context of Lamentations; Read: Lamentations + <i>IOT</i>
29 Apr	Lab	Exegetical investigation of Jeremiah 29:1-14
2 May	"At Home"	1822 Tioga Blvd., New Brighton
6 May	Lab	Exegetical investigation of Jeremiah 29:1-14 plus one page teaching or preaching outline. (post on Bb by midnight, 10 May)
13 May	Ezekiel	Scan <i>Historical Synopsis</i> for context of Ezekiel; Read Ezekiel 1-48 + <i>IOT</i> ; Worksheet 6
20 May	Daniel	Scan <i>Historical Synopsis</i> for context of Daniel; Read Daniel 1-12 + <i>IOT</i> ; Worksheet 7
27 May	The Twelve	Read: Book of the Twelve (total) + <i>IOT</i> (Hos.-Jon.); Worksheet 8 PA Portfolio (post on Bb by midnight, 27 May)
3 June	Hebrew Canon; Preaching/Teaching the Prophets	Prepare a syntactical layout (clause map) of Haggai 1 (bring to class) Exam online