THE PROPHETS – STMA 527

Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry
Winter Quarter 2013 • Hunthausen 100 • Thursday 9:00-11:50 am

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to provide students with a historical, literary and theological overview of the prophets and the prophetic books in the Hebrew Bible. Although we will look at the Former Prophets, most of the class will focus on the Latter (Writing) Prophets. When possible, we will read prophetic books in their entirety, but for longer books we will read selected texts. By the end of this course I hope that you will better appreciate the rich diversity of form, style and theology we find in the prophetic books and that you will have found creative new ways to infuse your ministry with the prophetic tradition of the Hebrew Bible.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Ability to read scriptural texts critically (MDiv, MAPS, MATS).
- Ability to use biblical tools and resources as a way to inform their own exegesis for the purpose of doing their ministry (MDiv).
- Ability to be a responsive, discerning listener who can enter another's worldview [whether ancient or modern] (MDiv, MAPS, MATS).
- Awareness of their own social location/ assumptions/ hermeneutics as they engage the text in their own lives, their communities, and the larger world (MDiv).

III. TEXTBOOKS

A. Required

- 1. One of the following annotated Bibles: *The HarperCollins Study Bible*; *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* (which I will use in class); *The Catholic Study Bible* (2d ed.); *The New Interpreter's Study Bible*; *The Jewish Study Bible*.
 - Avoid the following translations: *The King James Version*; *The Message*; *The Living Bible*; *The Way*.
- 2. Donald Gowan, *Theology of the Prophetic Books: The Death and Resurrection of Israel* (Louisville, Ken.: Westminster John Knox, 1998). **Available at bookstore.**
- 3. Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Prophets* (2 vols.; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2010 [1962]). **Available at bookstore.**

B. Recommended [for personal enrichment]

- 1. An introduction to the Hebrew Bible:
 - a. Michael Coogan, *The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).
- 2. History of ancient Israel and the prophets of Israel:
 - a. Hershel Shanks (ed.), *Ancient Israel: From Abraham to the Roman Destruction of the Temple* (Washington: Biblical Archaeology Society, Revised and expanded edition, 1999).
 - b. Michael Coogan (ed.), Oxford History of the Biblical World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998)
 - c. Joseph Blenkinsopp, A History of Prophecy in Israel (Philadelphia: Westminster, Revised and enlarged edition, 1996).

IV. SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

JAN 10 INTRODUCTION

- Class logistics
- Terminology
- Prophecy potpourri

Recommended: Heschel, 1:3-26; Gowan, 1-21; Blenkinsopp, 1-39.

JAN 17 PROPHECY IN THE FORMER PROPHETS

Required:

Balaam: Num 22-24 Shemaiah: 1 Kgs 12:21-24 2 Chr 12:5-15 Elohistic: Gen 20:7; 20:17-18

Num 11-12 Jehu: 1 Kgs 16:1-4, 11-13; 2 Chr 19:2-3; 20:34

Dtn: Deut 18:9-22

Josiah: 1 Kgs 13:2; 23:1-25 Deborah: Judg 4-5 (cf. Deut 12, 16:5-6)

Samuel: 1 Sam 2-3; 7-12 Elijah: 1 Kgs 17-19, 21 2 Kgs 2:11-12

Saul: 1 Sam 10:5-7, 10-13, 20-22 (cf. 2 Kgs 9:30-37; 10:10-11)

1 Sam 18:10-11; 19:18-24;

28:3-25 Elisha: 2 Kgs 2-9

2 Kgs 13:14-21 Nathan: 2 Sam 7, 11-12; 1 Kgs 1

Micaiah: 1 Kgs 22:1-38 Gad: 1 Sam 22:5; 2 Sam 24:10-25

1 Chr 29:29; 2 Chr 29:25 Jonah: 2 Kgs 14:25-27

Solomon: 1 Kgs 3:5-15 Huldah: 2 Kgs 22:1-23:30

2 Chr 34-35

Ahijah: 1 Kgs 11:29-39; 14:1-18

Recommended: Blenkinsopp, 48-64.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Number 11:26-30.

JAN 24 AMOS AND HOSEA

Required: The book of Amos (entire); the book of Hosea (entire); Heschel, 1:27-60; 2:1-11; Gowan, 24-50.

Recommended: Blenkinsopp, 65-90.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Hosea 11:8-9.

JAN 31 MICAH AND FIRST ISAIAH

Required: The book of Micah (entire); Isaiah 1-12; Gowan, 50-77.

Recommended: Blenkinsopp, 91-110.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Isaiah 6:1-8.

FEB 7 FIRST ISAIAH (CONTINUED)

Required: Isaiah 19-20, 28-32, 34-39; Heschel, 1:61-102, 187-220.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Isaiah 19:19-22.

FEB 14 JEREMIAH

Required: Jeremiah 1-20; Heschel, 1:103-39; Gowan, 98-117.

Recommended: 2 Kings 21-25; Blenkinsopp, 129-60.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Jeremiah 1:4-10.

FEB 21 JEREMIAH (CONTINUED)

Required: Jeremiah 21-39; Heschel 2:59-78, 206-26; finish readings from previous week.

Recommended: Blenkinsopp, 209-12, 222-30.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Jeremiah 31:31-34.

FEB 28 EZEKIEL

Required: Ezekiel 1-24; 33-39; Gowan, 121-37.

Recommended: The rest of Ezekiel; Blenkinsopp, 161-80.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Ezekiel 37:1-14.

MAR 7 SECOND ISAIAH

Required: Isaiah 40-55; Heschel, 1:145-58; Gowan, 144-162.

Recommended: Blenkinsopp, 181-93; R.J. Clifford, Fair Spoken and Persuading (New

York: Paulist, 1984).

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Isaiah 49:14-15.

MAR 14 THIRD ISAIAH, HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH

Required: Isaiah 56-66; Haggai (entire); Zechariah 1-8; Gowan, 162-77.

Recommended: Blenkinsopp, 194-239.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Isaiah 56:1-8.

V. REQUIREMENTS

- A. **Reading assignments.** The readings listed should be completed prior to their assigned class.
- B. **Attendance and participation in class**. Attendance is imperative for a seminar-sized class that only meets ten times. Because absence lessens your participation in the course, it could lessen your participation grade as well. Beyond simply attending class, participation requires that you actively make contributions based on your familiarity with the assigned readings.
- C. **Weekly papers**. For each class you will be expected to turn in a one-page paper (literally, a single sheet with text only on one side) with **two** paragraphs. In the **first** I want you to respond to a biblical passage that I will choose from the assigned readings. In the **second** paragraph I want you to engage with the secondary literature (i.e., Heschel or Gowan). Choose something you found especially significant, insightful, challenging, or problematic, etc., and respond to it. These papers will be graded based on how thoughtfully you engage the assigned reading for that class. Late papers will not be accepted but will receive a zero.

D. **Final Paper**. This paper will be a 10-page exegesis of a biblical text from a list that I will supply. (Students may propose to study a text not on the list. Such a proposal should be typed, double-spaced, about a page long, and it should persuade me that your proposed passage is the only biblical text that will enable you to write a successful paper. Proposals must be submitted to me by January 31. Unpersuasive proposals will not be approved.)

The term "exegesis" refers to "the process of careful, analytical study of biblical passages undertaken in order to produce useful interpretations of those passages... The goal of exegesis is to know neither less nor more than the information actually contained in the passage" (D. Stuart, "Exegesis," in *ABD* II, p. 682). A handout with more information on how to approach this paper, a list of biblical passages available for study, and a rubric will be distributed separately. Additionally, it may be helpful to consult M. Gorman's *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers* (rev. and exp.; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2009).

This paper will be due Thursday, March 21, at 9:50 am. Late papers will lose 10 points for each day that it is late.

VI. ASSESSMENT

Your final grade will be calculated thus:	Letter grades will be determined thus:
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Final Paper	40%	A	93 - 100
Weekly Papers	40%	A-	90 - 92.99
Participation	20%	B+	87 - 89.99
Final Grade	100%	В	83 - 86.99
		B-	80 - 82.99
		C+	77 - 79.99
		C	73 - 76.99
		C-	70 - 72.99
		D+	67 – 69.99
		D	63 - 66.99
		D-	60 - 62.99
		F	< 60

VII. SPECIAL NEEDS

If you have or think you may have a disability (including an "invisible disability" such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs and arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, 206-296-5740.

VIII. ACADEMIC HONESTY

The School of Theology and Ministry strictly adheres to the Academic Policy concerning Academic Honesty as published in the Seattle University Student Handbook (see the Seattle University website).

IX. CITATION FORMAT

Students in the Pastoral Counseling degree submit papers with citations in APA (American Psychological Association) format delineated by the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. All other students submit papers with citations in CMS (Chicago Manual of Style) format delineated by *The Chicago Manual of Style: The Essential Guide for Writers, Editors, and Publishers*. The basic rules for these style formats may be found at the following websites:

- APA: http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/ (Diana Hacker website/social sciences)
- CMS http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/ (Diana Hacker website/history)

 or http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html (CMS website)

At times students need assistance with the writing process itself. In addition to face-to-face assistance offered by Seattle University's Writing Center (McGoldrick Learning Commons 2nd Floor), two websites offer online assistance with writing.

- Seattle University Writing Center: http://www.seattleu.edu/writingcenter/ (Resources)
- Purdue Writing Center: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/