

BETHEL SEMINARY SD

OT 640—Introduction to Hebrew Exegesis Course Syllabus, Spring 2008

Instructor: Daniel Watson
Time: Mondays, 7:15-10pm

Office: 225 Ext. 224
d-watson@bethel.edu

Description and Purpose

This course is an introduction to the principles and methodology of Old Testament exegesis through the systematic study of a biblical book in the Hebrew text. Attention will be given to essential issues such as textual criticism, historical-cultural backgrounds, literary genre and structure, and the contribution of synthesized exegesis to the development of a biblical theology, both as a subject area and as part of general theological reflection for the Church. The book of choice this particular term is Jonah.

Textbooks and Resources

1. It is assumed that students already possess the basic tools for study of the Hebrew text: BHS, BDB, a good grammar, etc.
2. A standard English version of the Bible (avoid paraphrases or overly “contemporary” versions). Students who are not native English speakers are welcome to use a comparable version in their mother tongue.
3. Brotzman, Ellis R. *Old Testament Textual Criticism: a Practical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994.
4. Chisholm, Robert B., Jr. *A Workbook for Intermediate Hebrew: Grammar, Exegesis, and Commentary on Jonah and Ruth*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006.
5. Kaiser, Walter C., Jr. *Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament: a Guide for the Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.
6. Nixon, Rosemary. *The Message of Jonah*. The Bible Speaks Today. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003.
7. Stuart, Douglas. *Old Testament Exegesis: a Primer for Students and Pastors*, 3rd ed. Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

Requirements (subject to reasonable modification at the Instructor's discretion)

1. Attendance: faithful, punctual, and active.
2. Reading of the pertinent parts of the above textbooks or as assigned.
3. Translation of the entire Book of Jonah from the Hebrew text, verse by verse, kept as part of a commentary notebook project (CNP). The entire CNP will consist of at least three and potentially four parts: (a) an introduction to the book (b) a verse by verse translation with exegetical notes and commentary (c) appendices—word studies, sermon outlines, etc. (d) a preliminary bibliography of published studies on Jonah. Of these four parts, (a), (b), and (d) are required.
4. Two exams, a Midterm and a Final.
5. A 10-15pp exegetical paper on a passage in Jonah. See the OT Core Course Syllabus Supplement on guidelines regarding term paper protocols. Students must submit a paper proposal by the end of Reading week (Friday 9 May). Failure to do so automatically disqualifies the student from submitting a paper for credit, thus resulting in a 0 for that assignment. Deadline: 5pm Friday, 13 June 2008. Late papers are completely at the mercy of the Instructor.

Grades

1. The course grade is the average of four assignment grades: the two exams, the exegetical paper, and the commentary notebook project.
2. Each assignment receives a number grade from 0 to 4.0, using the scale adopted by the Bethel Faculty (the scale can be found in the Bethel catalog under “Academic Information and Policies”). An assignment grade is determined through objective calculation of the number of mistakes combined with subjective consideration of the nature of those mistakes. This system is designed to reflect the *quality* level of student performance in the judgment of the Instructor. Some errors are minor, some errors are major, and beyond a certain minimal level how many things student get right is less important than what kinds of things students get right.
3. Extensions are negotiable within Seminary policy but should not be sought unless actually needed. The Instructor reserves the right to grant or deny such requests at discretion, basing such decisions on perceptions about actual inability to complete the work on time versus simple failure to do so. For a formal extension to be granted, the student must fill out the Incomplete Contract, available from the Associate Registrar. Failure to fulfill the contract by the stipulated date results in Failure for the course. Under no circumstances will the extension date be set beyond 31 August 2008. There is no presumption that similar cases will be treated similarly. Each situation is evaluated on a case by case basis.

4. Students who require special arrangements to enable them to meet course requirements due to disability should contact either the Instructor or the Access Coordinator for the Bethel Office of Disability Services (see *Student Handbook*). This should be done as soon as possible.

5. As all Christian learning is to be ruled by a reverence for Truth, students are expected to observe the principles of academic integrity set forth in the Seminary catalog.

Course Schedule

Mar 31—Orientation; Introduction to Exegesis; Introduction to the Book of Jonah

Apr 7—Textual Criticism; Exegesis-Exposition of 1:1ff

Apr 14—Literary Criticism

Apr 21—Grammatical Criticism

Apr 28--Lexical Criticism

Midterm Exam Period: Apr 29-May 9

May 5—Reading Week: No Class

May 12—Historical-Cultural Criticism

May 19—Biblical Theology

May 26—Memorial Day: No Class

June 2—Application: the Challenge of Contextualization

June 9—Moving from Exegesis to Exposition

Final Exam Period: June 10-20

REMINDER: Papers due by 5pm, Friday 13 June 2008