

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
BOT 540 Studies in Poetical Books: Psalms

Roger D. Cotton, Th.D.
e-mail: rcotton@agts.edu

Summer II 2007

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An exegetical and devotional study of the Psalms with an emphasis on understanding them as Hebrew poetry in their cultural and theological context so that the student will be able to properly principle and effectively apply these books to their lives as the Word of God and minister them to the church today.

OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Summarize important characteristics of the psalms.
2. Recognize and deal with properly the important features of Hebrew poetry as they relate to interpreting the psalms.
3. Explain and apply the major themes and concepts expressed in the psalms, including messianic references.
4. Preach and minister legitimately and effectively the theological principles underlying any psalm.

TEXTBOOKS

Required:

Bullock, C. Hassell. Encountering the Book of the Psalms: A Literary and Theological Introduction. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001.

Cotton, Roger D., ed. BOT 540 Psalms Handouts 2007 (AGTS)

The Holy Bible: Contemporary English Version. New York: American Bible Society, 1995.

Gaebelein, Frank E., ed. The Expositor's Bible Commentary. Vol. 5, Psalms – Song of Songs. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991.

COURSE OUTLINE

Mon	June 4	Introduction and Psalm 1
Tues	5	TURN IN summaries of assigned psalms and differences in the 5 books; discussion of Psalm 2

Weds	6	Psalm 8
Thurs	7	Ps 16
Fri	8	TURN IN essay on the Messiah in the psalms; discuss Pss 22 and 68
Mon	11	Ps 110
Tues	12	TURN IN diagram of chosen psalm; discuss Psalm 45
Weds	13	Ps 103, praise and worship
Thurs	14	Ps 69 and imprecation
Fri	15	Laments and principles of prayer
Mon	18	Pss 42, 43, 73, dealing with emotions
Tues	19	Ps 23 and trust
Weds	20	Ps 119 and wisdom psalms
Thurs-Mon	21-25	Ps 19 and various psalms and points of theology and interpretation
Mon	25	TURN IN sermon series topics
Tues-Thurs	26-28	Presentations by students
Fri	29	Essay Final Exam

METHODOLOGY

Lecture, discussion, readings, essays, and research writing project.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class attendance is expected: maximum allowable absences is three class periods. Please talk to the professor about any absences.

1. Be prepared to discuss the passages assigned for each day including reading them in the CEV, checking other translations, and reading the textbook commentary by VanGemeren and whatever Bullock says on them. As the course proceeds various handouts will be assigned for reading.
2. In the first class you will be assigned five psalms to read and write one sentence summations for the next class and to note any possible differences among the five books of the psalms. Also, read chapters 1-3 in Bullock.
3. Turn in on Friday, June 8, a 3-4 page typed essay, double spaced, right margin NOT justified, on the prophetic/messianic understanding of Psalms 2, 16, and 22, by New Testament writers. This essay must explain general principles as well as deal with a few specific points from these three psalms which demonstrate your understanding of how they can be related to Jesus. The reading for it must include the relevant handouts, especially the article by Moo, and two of the best scholarly, theological, commentaries on these three psalms, in addition to the textbook commentary by VanGemeren. The major issue is how did the Old Testament Psalmist understand what he or she wrote in the passages which the New Testament writers say speak of Christ? In what way or ways are

these psalms passages prophetic? It may be that each was understood to relate in a different way, thus representing three different understandings of the inspired intent of different prophetic passages. Give your view on this.

4. Turn in on Tuesday, June 12, a flow of thought analytical diagram of the psalm chosen for the exegetically researched, application project described below. Instructions will be given in class and the recommended reading is Walter Kaiser, Toward An Exegetical Theology, chapters 4 and 8, on reserve. This is not expected to be your final understanding of the text but will give an opportunity for feedback from the professor before proceeding further with the exegesis.
5. Turn in on Thursday, June 28, or present on a date agreed upon with the professor, as described below, an exegetical research and application project on a psalm of your choice approved by the professor. This is to be a careful, Biblical-theological, study of a psalm with strong application for God's people today. It does not have to be in the form of a traditional research paper but it must demonstrate good interpretive method utilizing the best scholarly tools, including evidence of the following:
 - A. Understanding the language of the text through comparing translations and doing some word studies, which include at least the use of the Hebrew English Concordance for the NIV or the (New) Englishman's Hebrew Concordance (coded to Strong's) for the KJV, or a computer program that searches the Hebrew, and the New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis (NIDOTTE).
 - A. Understanding the significance of the historical and cultural references in the psalm through background studies, including Dictionary of Biblical Imagery, and scholarly, exegetical commentaries.
 - B. Understanding the literary flow of thought and studying the literary devices used by the writer. **NOTE: TURN IN** a flow of thought **diagram** (instructions to be explained in class) of your psalm on Tuesday, June 12.
 - C. Understanding the theology intended through analyzing the theological and thematic terms and ideas used in context of the psalms and of the whole Old Testament, and determining the underlying principles intended as the message of the inspired writer. Here again the best commentaries should be consulted (the * ones in the bibliography below are required and choose 2 additional ones), as well as Old Testament theologies. Be sure to research journal articles and read at least one to qualify for an A grade.

There are three choices for method of presentation below, all of which must conclude with a simple sermon outline applying the results to people today, with a proposition and all the points answering a transitional question on the proposition, and coming from the passage (see Perry at the end of the handouts). All three choices also require

a **full bibliography** of all sources consulted (not just cited). Articles in multi-author books (like NIDOTTE) must follow 11.26 in Turabian 6th ed.

CHOICES FOR METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

1) Present in class, in 20 minutes, the highlights of a detailed 2-3 page outline of the results of your study, at a time agreed upon with the professor. The outline must be turned in by noon the day before the presentation for photocopying by the department and preview by the professor.

1) OR Present the above outline to the professor in his office, turned in the day before.

3) OR Turn in a 9-12 page paper OR a 5-7 page researched, exegetical, sermon or teaching outline on Thursday, June 28.

For all three choices provide a bibliography listing all sources consulted, not just cited, for proper evaluation of your research. I require that any signed articles from multi-author works, such as NIDOTTE and encyclopedias, be listed by author and title of the article rather than of the book, (see Turabian 11.26).

For a paper the style should conform to Turabian 6th ed. with your choice of citation method: footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical references (see Turabian 6th ed. chap. 10). However, for a sermon outline few citations are expected. Most of those needed will be for explanations to the professor, not to the sermon audience. The outline need not be double spaced throughout, but do **NOT** justify the right margin. Provide a title page but no cover, just staple it.

For a sermon be sure to present your thesis at the end of your introduction in a proposition and a transitional question about that proposition which is answered by the main points of the sermon. The points must come from the text though not necessarily in the same order. The main points must be sentences and the points parallel to one another. I recommend the approach of Lloyd Perry in a Manual for Biblical Preaching, the Foundational Pattern, pp. 65-72, 82 (see the last of the handouts).

Detailed explanations of significant exegetical decisions behind the project need to be written out for the professor even though certain reasons may not be discussed publicly to avoid unnecessary confusion. They may be put in some kind of note to the professor set off from the rest of the material. You need to demonstrate the thoroughness and soundness of your exegetical work to the professor if not always to the ministry audience. Be sure to include what the text meant to the OT readers/hearers as well as the principles you see that you want your people to apply to their lives today. You may include brief descriptions of the illustrations you plan to use but that is not required.

Write a careful conclusion summarizing how you have established your proposition or answered your question and then suggesting specific applications for our lives today. Be sure to end with something that will effectively impress the message on the hearers' hearts.

8. Turn in on Monday, June 25, three topics for a series of 3 sermons from any 3 adjacent psalms that have some relationship to one another. These topics need to be specific enough to clearly summarize the message you would preach or teach.
9. Write an essay exam on Friday, June 29, synthesizing the principles taught in the course and gained from the readings, including the importance of understanding Hebrew poetry for understanding these books. What characteristics of Hebrew poetry must be kept in mind to properly understand the intent of the inspired writers? Use some specific illustrations from the psalms. Synthesize your own summary of this subject that you could use to teach people in our churches.

Late work will be penalized 1 point per day late using a 12 point scale (12 = A, 1 = F).

WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED TO ROGER COTTON

All work for me must be typed, double spaced, with one-inch margins and the right margin NOT justified, and be proof-read. Your writing should demonstrate good, formal, clear, writing style (see handouts and Strunk and White or *Getting the Words Right*). For questions about format see Turabian 6th edition. If you need to cite a source you may choose which one of the three citation methods in Turabian you prefer to use: foot notes, end notes, or parenthetical. For assignments with specific readings, no bibliography is needed unless you want the professor to know about additional reading you did. If the source has been assigned, just put the last name in parentheses with the page number. The length may exceed the limit by a page or so. If you do not have it finished when it is discussed in class you shouldn't listen to the discussion. Put the following information at the top of the first page or on a title page: Name, assignment, course, my name, date. Do not put anything but the page numbers at the top of the other pages. No title page is needed for work under 4 pages. Do not use a cover, just staple it.

GRADING PROCEDURE

Reading Assignments and class participation	10%
Essay on Prophetic/Messianic understanding	18%
Plan for Sermon Series	7%
Exegetical project	40%
Concluding Essay Exam on Hebrew Poetry	25%

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(* these are the ones which must be consulted)

Alden, Robert L. Psalms: Songs of Devotion, vol. 1, Psalms 1-50. Chicago: Moody, 1974.

_____. Psalms: Songs of Dedication, vol. 2, Psalms 51-100. Chicago: Moody, 1975.

_____. Psalms: Songs of Discipleship, vol. 3, Psalms 101-150. Chicago: Moody, 1976.

Alexander, T. Desmond, and Brian S. Rosner, eds. New Dictionary of Biblical Theology. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

* Allen, Leslie C. Psalms 101-150. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco, TX: Word, 1983.

_____. Word Biblical Themes: Psalms. Waco, TX: Word, 1987.

Alter, Robert. The Art of Biblical Poetry. New York: Basic Books, 1985.

Anderson, A. A. The Book of Psalms. 2 vols. NCBC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981, .

Bellinger, W. H., Jr. Psalms: Reading and Studying the Book of Praises. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1990.

Bratcher, Robert G. and William D. Reyerburn. A Translator's Handbook on the Book of Psalms. New York: United Bible Societies, 1991.

* Broyles, Craig C. Psalms. NIBC. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999.

Brown, William P. Seeing The Psalms: A Theology of Metaphor. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002.

Bullock, C. Hassell. An Introduction to the Poetic Books of the Old Testament. Rev. ed. Chicago: Moody Press, 1979.

Bullock, C. Hassell. Encountering the Book of the Psalms: A Literary and Theological Introduction. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001.

Clifford, Richard J. Psalms 1-72. AOTC. Nashville: Abingdon, 2002.

Cole, Robert L. The Shape and Message of Book III: Psalms 73-89. JSOTSS. Sheffield, England: Sheffield, 2000.

* Craigie, Peter C. Psalms 1-50. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco, TX: Word, 1983.

Dahood, Mitchell. Psalms, 3 vols. Anchor Bible. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965-70.

Delitzsch, F. J. Job through Song of Solomon, vols. 4, 5, 6, in Commentary on the Old Testament by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, reprinted. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.

Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. How To Read The Bible For All Its Worth. 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993.

Firth, David and Philip S. Johnson, eds. Interpreting the Psalms: Issues and Approaches. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005.

Gerstenberger, Erhard S. Psalms: Part 1, With an Introduction to Cultic Poetry. The Forms of the Old Testament Literature, vol. 14. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

_____. Psalms: Part 2, and Lamentations. FOTL 15. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001

Goldingay, John. Psalms. Vol. 1: Psalms 1-41. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006.

Goldsworthy, Graeme. Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000.

Gottwald, Norman K. "Poetry, Hebrew." In The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, ed. George Arthur Buttrick, 3:829- 38. Nashville: Abingdon, 1962.

Grogan, G.W. "The Experience of Salvation in the Old Testament and the New Testament." Vox Evangelica 5 (1967): 4-26.

Harris, R. Laird, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds. Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament. 2 vols. Chicago: Moody Press, 1980.

Hossfeld, Frank-Lothar and Erich Zenger. Psalms 2: A Commentary on Psalms 51-100. Translated by Linda M. Maloney. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005.

House, Paul R. Old Testament Theology. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998.

Howard, David M., Jr. The Structure o Psalms 93-100. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997.

Hummel, Horace D. The Word Becoming Flesh. St. Louis: Concordia, 1979.

Inch, Morris A. Psychology in the Psalms: A Portrait of Man in God's World. Waco, TX: Word, 1969.

Kaiser, Walter C., Jr., ed. Classical Evangelical Essays in Old Testament Interpretation. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973.

_____. The Old Testament in Contemporary Preaching. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973.

_____. Toward an Old Testament Theology. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978.

_____. Toward an Exegetical Theology. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.

_____. A Biblical Approach to Personal Suffering. Chicago: Moody, 1982.

_____. Toward Old Testament Ethics. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983.

_____. The Uses of the Old Testament In The New. Chicago: Moody, 1985.

_____. The Messiah in the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995.

Keel-Leu, Othmar. The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms. Translated by Timothy J. Hallett. New York: Seabury Press, 1978.

Kidner, Derek. Psalms, 2 vols. TOTC. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1964.

Kitchen, K. A. The Bible In Its World. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1977.

Kraus, Hans-Joachim. Theology of the Psalms. Translated by Keith Crim. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986.

_____. Psalms 1-59 and Psalms 60-150. Translated by Hilton C. Oswald. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988 and 1989.

Kugel, James L. The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and Its History. New Haven, CT: University Press, 1981.

Lange, Harvey D. "The Relationship Between Psalm 22 and the Passion Narrative." Concordia Theological Monthly 43 (1972): 610-21.

Leupold, H. C. Exposition of the Psalms. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1959.

Lewis, C. S. Reflections on the Psalms. New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1958.

Limburg, James. Psalms. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2000.

Longman, Tremper, III. How To Read The Psalms. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988.

_____. and D. G. Reid. God Is a Warrior. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995.

McCann, J. Clinton, Jr. A Theological Introduction to the Book of Psalms: The Psalms as Torah. Nashville: Abingdon, 1993.

_____. "The Book of Psalms." In The New Interpreter's Bible, ed. Leander E. Keck, 4:639-1280. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996.

_____. and James C. Howell. Preaching the Psalms. Nashville: Abingdon, 2001.

Mays, James Luther. The Lord Reigns: A Theological Handbook on the Psalms. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1994.

_____. Psalms. Interpretation. Louisville: John Knox, 1994.

Moberly, R. W. L. "Lament." In New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis, ed. Willem A. VanGemeren, 4:866-884. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.

Moo, Douglas J. "The Problem of Sensus Plenior." In Hermeneutics, Authority, and Canon, ed. D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge, 179-211. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986.

Murphy, Roland E. Wisdom Literature & Psalms. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983.

Perowne, J. J. Stewart. The Book of Psalms. 1878; reprint, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976.

Perry, Lloyd Merle. A Manual for Biblical Preaching. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1965.

Peterson, David L. Interpreting Hebrew Poetry. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1992.

Pritchard, J. B. Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament. 3d ed., with Supplement. Princeton: University Press, 1969.

Raabe, Paul R. "Deliberate Ambiguity in the Psalter." Journal of Biblical Literature 110 (Summer 1991): 213-227.

_____. Psalm Structures: A Study of Psalms and Refrains. JSOTSS. Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1993.

Ryken, Leland, and Tremper Longman III, eds. A Complete Literary Guide to the Bible. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993.

Ryken, Leland, James C. Wilhoit, and Tremper Longman III, eds. Dictionary of Biblical Imagery. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998.

Stuart, Douglas. Old Testament Exegesis: A Primer for Students and Pastors. 2d ed. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984.

* Tate, Marvin E. Psalms 51-100. Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas: Word Books, 1990.

Thomas, D. Winton, ed. Documents From Old Testament Times. New York: Harper and Row, 1958.

* VanGemeren, Willem A. "Psalms." In The Expositor's Bible Commentary, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, 5:1-880. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991.

_____, ed. New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.

Waltke, Bruce K. "Psalms, Theology of." In New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis, ed. Willem A. VanGemeren, 4:1100-1115. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.

Walton, John H. Ancient Israelite Literature in its Cultural Context. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989.

_____. Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament: Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.

Weiser, Artur. The Psalms: A Commentary. OTL. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962.

Westermann, Claus. Praise and Lament in the Psalms. Translated by Keith R. Crim & Richard N. Soulen. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981.

* Wilson, Gerald H. Psalms. NIVAC. Grand Rapids : Zondervan, 2002.

Wood, George O. A Psalm in Your Heart, 2 vols. Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1997, 1999.

Zuck, Roy B., ed. A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament. Chicago: Moody, 1991.

SPECIFIC DATA

Prepared by Roger D. Cotton, Th.D., March 2007.