

# ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BHE 534 Studies in the Torah: Numbers

Roger D. Cotton, Th.D.

Fall, 2001

## COURSE SYLLABUS

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

An intensive exegesis of selected passages from the book of Numbers from the Hebrew text with emphasis on translation issues, exegetical methodology, and application to biblical theology. The course is intended to take the student from Hebrew I into Hebrew exegesis.

### OBJECTIVES

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

1. Competently deal with textual, translational, and exegetical issues in the Hebrew Bible.
2. Explain the translation and meaning of the passages discussed in this course and their relationship to biblical theology.
3. Discuss the message and theology of the book as a whole in relation to the context then and of the church today.

### TEXTBOOKS

#### Required:

Each student needs a copy of the Hebrew text of Micah and Joel with textual notes, preferably Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia edited by K. Elliger, and W. Rudolph. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1977. Also a good lexicon is needed--either Holladay, Wm. L. A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament, or Brown, Driver, Briggs. A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament. Both must be consulted for the research in the course.

Ashley, Timothy R. The Book of Numbers. NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.

Brotzman, Ellis R. Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994.

Chisholm, Robert B. From Exegesis to Exposition: A Practical Introduction. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.

Contemporary English Version of the Bible. New York: American Bible Society, 1995.

Waltke, Bruce K., and M. O'Connor. An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990.

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### **Recommended:**

Owens, John Joseph. Analytical Key to the Old Testament. Vol. 1, Genesis-Joshua. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990.

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

#### *Weeks*

1-3	Numbers 1: 1-4, 44-54; 6:22-27
4	Textual Criticism
5	Numbers 11:10-29
6	" "
7	Numbers 14:1-34
8	" "
9	Numbers 16:1-40
10	Numbers 20:2-13
11	Numbers 24:10-19
12-14	Presentations of papers
15	Final Exam Tuesday, Dec. 11, 10:15 a.m.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Lecture, discussion of translation and reading assignments, exegetical research presentations.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Class attendance is expected; maximum allowable absences is four (4) class periods.

1. Be prepared for each class to discuss reading and translation assignments. The relevant sections in Ashley must be read and the CEV compared to your translation. As well, each student will choose another version and commentary to compare. The following readings must be completed by the end of the course but are most beneficial early in the course: the Chisholm textbook on using Hebrew in exegesis; Waltke & O'Connor chapters 1-4, 11, 20, 21, 24, 29-34, 38-40 (skim over the details and focus on key substantive statements of principle, definition, and summary).
2. Read Brotzman and be prepared to discuss textual criticism Tuesday, Sept. 18.
3. Write a final exam on Tuesday, Dec. 11 at 10:15 a.m. over the Hebrew exegesis and biblical theology done in class.

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4. Turn in on the date to be assigned (one day before class presentation, during the last 3 weeks of the term) a thorough 10-15 page, typed, double-spaced, exegesis paper on 4-12 verses of your choice from Numbers (or Exodus or Leviticus) approved by the professor. A draft diagram of the passage must be turned in Thursday, Oct. 4. The focus of the paper is to be on understanding God's principles communicated in the passage through careful Hebrew exegesis emphasizing the biblical theological context. Do not justify the right margin. Turabian's 6th edition must be carefully followed as well as the guidelines listed below which follow, in order, the parts of the paper.
  - a. Title Page (no cover; simply staple the pages)
  - b. Introduction: Present your choice of the passage and your basic outline for the paper. Prepare the reader in any way necessary for your work. Give a brief summary of the context. Then mention the main issues of your passage that you will deal with.
  - c. A photocopy of the Hebrew of your passage.
  - d. Your translation of the passage.
  - e. Your analytical diagram of the progression of the passage. (A first draft of your diagram must be submitted Thursday, October 4.)
  - f. Your outline of the passage based on the diagram.
  - g. Body of the paper: You will begin the body on a separate page, but no sections should do so. It should be divided into a few major sections with titles (but not called "chapters"). You may use footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical references as described by Turabian. The exegesis should reflect principles discussed in class, with serious consideration of Chisholm's approach (Douglas Stuart's exegesis primer (see the bibliography) is also recommended). Be sure to include the following but not necessarily in this order:
    - 1) Discussion of exegetically significant textual variants and your choices and why. (It is possible that you will have none.)
    - 2) Discussion of difficult or theologically significant words, phrases, grammatical constructions, and syntax. This should involve research in a concordance, in scholarly word study reference material, in syntax books and reference grammars, besides other literature.
    - 3) Analysis of rhetorical, syntactical and thematic structure or progression of thought which presents the significant interpretive observations from the

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- analytical diagram of the passage and its context in the total flow of thought.
- 4) Incorporation of significant insights from cultural and historical background research.
  - 5) Consultation of the major pertinent scholarly books and articles. Be sure to check the important commentaries.
  - 6) The overall priority is your original synthesis of the data and opinions pertinent to exegetical interpretation based heavily on the Hebrew text with clear communication of conclusions.
  - 7) Major theological principles involved in the meaning of the text should be noted and the issues and conclusions summarized, and applications of the meaning for Christians today should be suggested in the conclusion.
- h. Appendix: A brief sermon outline with proposition and transitional question. The supporting points must come from the text and answer the transitional question. The conclusion should sum up and apply what you have said. This is intended to be a blessing, not a curse. So let it flow as the fruit and culmination of your labors.
- i. Endnotes (if used)
- j. Bibliography or Reference List (as appropriate): The bibliography should contain all sources consulted that may have influenced your thinking in some way. Signed articles from books such as encyclopedias, word books, or multi-author works are to be listed by the author and title of the article (see Turabian, 6th edition, 11.26).
5. Present to the class on the date to be assigned (1 day after the paper is due) a 25-30 minute summary with a 1-3 page typed summary handout of your exegetical work and conclusions from your paper, with applications for Christians today. The professor will photocopy the typed summary for the class which should include, at the end, the three sources you found most helpful. This presentation will not be a separate grade from the paper but is intended to benefit the class and help the professor to better understand and appreciate your work.
6. Late work will be penalized 1 point per day late using a 12 point scale (12=A, 1=F).

### GRADING PROCEDURE

Class preparation and participation	20%
Final Exam	35%
Exegesis paper with summary class presentation	45%

**SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**Exegetical Tools for Hebrew Exegesis**

Alonso-Schoekel, Luis. A Manual of Hebrew Poetics. Rome: Editrice pontificio Instituto biblico, 1988.

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

Andersen, Francis I. The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew. The Hague: Mouton, 1974.

Armerding, Carl E. The Old Testament and Criticism. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.

Barr, James. Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968.

\_\_\_\_\_. The Semantics of Biblical Language. New York: Oxford University Press, 1961.

Bible Works. (excellent concordance software). Hermeneutika. Big Fork, MT.

Carson, D. A. Exegetical Fallacies. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984.

Clines, David J. A., ed. The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew. (Vol. 1 & 2). Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993.

Danker, Frederick W. Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study. Rev. ed. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993.

Deist, F. E. Towards the Text of the Old Testament. Translated by W. K. Winckler. Pretoria: N. G. Kerkboekhandel Transvaal, 1978.

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(New) Englishman's Hebrew Concordance, reprinted by Hendrickson, Peabody, MA.

Even-Shoshan, Avraham, ed. A New Concordance of the Bible. Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer Publishing House, 1982; Baker, 1989.

Follis, Elaine R., ed. Directions in Biblical Hebrew Poetry. JSOT Supplement. Series 40. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987.

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Gesenius, William. A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament. Translated by Edward Robinson. Edited by Francis Brown, S. D. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1907; reprinted with corrections, 1972.

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Jackson Jared J., and Martin Kessler, eds. Rhetorical Criticism: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg. Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series, No. 1. General Editor Dikan Y. Hadidian. Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1974.

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Nida, Eugene A., and Charles R. Taber. The Theory and Practice of Translation. Leiden: E. S. Brill, 1974.

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**SPECIFIC DATA**

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