

# ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BHE 537 Studies in the Writings:  
Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes

Roger D. Cotton, Th.D.

Fall, 2002

## COURSE SYLLABUS

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

An intensive exegesis of selected passages from Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes from the Hebrew text with emphasis on translation issues, advanced Hebrew, 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 Psalms and wisdom literature.
2. Discuss the translation and meaning of the passages selected for this course and their relationship to biblical theology.

### TEXTBOOKS

#### Required:

Each student needs a copy of the Hebrew text of Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes with textual notes, preferably Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia edited by K. Elliger, and W. Rudolph. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, latest edition. 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. Holladay is preferred for general use.

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

Chisholm, Robert B. From Exegesis to Exposition: A Practical Guide to Using Biblical Hebrew. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.

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

Craigie, Peter C. Psalms 1-50 Word Biblical Commentary. Vol. 19. Waco, TX: Word, 1983.

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

### Recommended:

Owens, John Joseph. Analytical Key to the Old Testament. Vol. 3. Ezra-Song of Solomon. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991.

### COURSE OUTLINE

#### *Class:*

1	Sept.	3	Tues
2		5	Thurs
3		10	Tues
4		12	Thurs
5		17	Tues
6		19	Thurs
7		24	Tues
8		26	Thurs
9	Oct.	1	Tues
10		3	Thurs
11		8	Tues
12		10	Thurs
13		15	Tues
14		17	Thurs
15		22	Tues
16		24	Thurs
17		29	Tues
18		31	Thurs
19	Nov.	5	Tues
20		7	Thurs
21		12	Tues
22		14	Thurs
23		19	Tues
24		21	Thurs
25		26	Tues
--		28	Thurs
26-28	Dec.	3-10	
29-30		17	Tues

#### *Psalm:*

Introduction and Psalm 1
Psalm 2 and translation tools
Psalm 2 and diagramming
Finish Psalm 2
Psalm 8
Psalm 8
Text Criticism-- <b>Discussion of Brotzman</b>
Psalm 16
Psalm 16
Psalm 22 <b>Diagrams Due</b>
Psalms 23 and 103
Psalm 45
Psalm 110
Psalm 51
Job 19:25-27; 14:14
Proverbs 3:1-6
Selected Proverbs
Selected Proverbs
(Guest scholar?)
Ecclesiastes 1, 2
Ecclesiastes 3, 12
Presentation of Papers
Presentation of Papers
<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>
Presentation of Papers
<b>FINAL EXAM</b> 10:15 - 12:45

### METHODOLOGY

Lecture, discussion of translation and reading assignments, exegetical 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 Craigie 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 and Waltke & O'Connor chapters 1-4, 11, 20, 21, 24, 29-34, 38-40; skim the details and focus on key substantive statements of principle, definition, and summary.
2. Read Brotzman and be prepared to discuss textual criticism Thursday, Sept. 24.
3. Write a final exam on Tuesday, Dec. 17 at 10:15 a.m. over the Hebrew exegesis and biblical theology done in class.
4. Turn in on the date to be assigned (during the last 4 weeks of the term) a thorough 10-15 page, typed, double-spaced, exegesis paper on 6 or more verses of your choice from Psalms, Proverbs 1-9, or Ecclesiastes and approved by the professor. A draft diagram of the passage must be turned in Thursday, Oct. 3. The focus of the paper is to be on understanding God's principles communicated in the passage through careful Hebrew exegesis emphasizing the poetic 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, Oct. 3.)
- 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 in 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 very possible that you will have none.)
  - 2) Discussion of difficult or theologically significant words, phrases, grammatical constructions, and syntax. This must 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 analytical diagram of the passage and its context in the total flow of thought.
  - 4) Incorporation of significant insights from cultural and historical background and research. (Be sure to check the Dict. of Bib. Imagery)
  - 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	25%
Final Exam	30%
Exegesis paper with summary class presentation	45%

### **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

#### **Philological Exegetical Tools**

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.

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

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

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Clines, David J. A., ed. The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew. (incomplete). 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.

Einspahr, Bruce. Index to Brown Driver & Briggs Hebrew Lexicon. Chicago: Moody Press, 1977.

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

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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.

\_\_\_\_\_. Hebrew Grammar. 2d ed. Edited and revised by E. Kautzsch and A. E. Cowley. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910.

Ginsburg, Christian D. Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible. New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1966.

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

Gray, George Buchanan. The Forms of Hebrew Poetry. Prolegomenon by David Noel Freedman. 1915; reprint with Proleg., N.P.: KJAV Publishing House, Inc., 1972.

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

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Klein, Ralph W. Textual Criticism of the Old Testament: From the Septuagint to Qumran. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974.

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

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

Scott, William R. A Simplified Guide to BHS. 2d ed. Berkeley, CA: Bibal Press, 1990.

Silva, Moises. Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983.

Soulen, Richard N. Handbook of Biblical Criticism. 2d ed. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981.

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

Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament. Edited by Botterweck and Ringgren. Incomplete. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Tov, Emmanuel. Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.

Waltke, Bruce K. "Aims of Old Testament Textual Criticism." Westminster Theological Journal 51 (Spring 1989): 93-108.

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

Watts, J. Wash. A Survey of Syntax in the Hebrew Old Testament. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964.

Weingreen, J. Introduction to the Critical Study of the Text of the Hebrew Bible. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Williams, Ronald J. Hebrew Syntax: An Outline. 2d ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976.

Wurthwein, Ernst. The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979.

**Books and Articles Related to Psalms, Proverbs, or Ecclesiastes.**

Alden, R. L. "Chiastic Psalms: A Study in the Mechanics of Semitic Poetry in Psalms 1-50." Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 17 (1974): 11-28.

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Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982.

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### **SPECIFIC DATA**

Prepared by Roger D. Cotton, Th.D., July 2002.