

COS 421 | BIBLE IV: PROPHETS, PSALMS, AND WISDOM LITERATURE | SYLLABUS

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course examines God's Word as expressed through Israel's prophets, selected Psalms, and selected passages from Wisdom Literature.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to understand the origin, history, and use of these forms of biblical literature among God's people; exegete these forms of biblical literature; and apply exegesis to preaching, other pastoral responsibilities, and issues of the present day.

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TEXTS | REQUIRED

- Brueggemann, Walter, *Spirituality of the Psalms*
- Clifford, Richard, *Wisdom Literature*
- Stulman, Louis and Kim, Hyun Paul: *You Are My People: An Introduction to Prophetic Literature*

TEXTS | RECOMMENDED

- Birch, Brueggemann, Fretheim, and Petersen: *A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament, 2nd Edition*
- Ward, James M., *Thus Says the Lord: The Message of the Prophets*

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WEEKEND I

READING ASSIGNMENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 25-26

- Read *You Are My People* by Stulman and Kim
- Read ONE of the major prophetic books – Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Ezekiel – ENTIRELY.
- Read ONE of the Minor Prophets ENTIRELY.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 25-26

- **Write a five-page summary** of the Major Prophet whose book you read. Be sure to include any details about the author, the primary literary forms used by the author (visions; oracles; etc.), the author's historical context (pre-exilic/post-exilic), and the central theme of the book (judgment; hope; restoration).
- **Write a three-page summary** of the Minor Prophet whose book you read. Be sure to include any details about the author, the primary literary forms used by the author (visions; oracles; etc.), the author's historical context (pre-exilic/post-exilic), and the central theme of the book (judgment; hope; restoration).

- THESE PAPERS ARE DUE BY EMAIL (Bob.Rambo@christunitedjxn.org) NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 15, 2020.

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 25-26

- Be prepared to summarize for the class the prophetic books (Major AND Minor) you read/wrote about. Why did you choose them? What did you learn from them? What parallels did you discover for our current moment in history? In what ways can you interpret their messages for your congregations?
- Be prepared to share from your writings on the prophets with the class. Each student will have a designated amount of time (10 minutes) to do this for each prophet. Also, be prepared to respond to any questions from the instructor and your classmates regarding your work.

TENTATIVE WEEKEND I SCHEDULE

FRIDAY

- 5:45 COS Worship
 6:45 Welcome/Introductions/Review of COS 421
 7:15 EXEGESIS AND WHY IT MATTERS
 7:45 Introduction to the Prophets
 What is a prophet?
 What is prophecy?
 What are the “languages” of the prophets? (prophecies, visions, oracles)
 8:00 ISAIAH (students who read ISA are invited to share/lead)
 9:00 JEREMIAH (students who read JER are invited to share/lead)
 10:00 Adjourn for the evening

SATURDAY

- 7:45 EZEKIEL (students who read EZ are invited to share/lead)
 8:45 HOSEA (students who read HOS are invited to share/lead)
 9:25 AMOS (students who read AMOS are invited to share/lead)
 9:55 MICAH (students who read MIC are invited to share/lead)
 10:40 ZEPHANIAH (students who read ZEPH are invited to share/lead)
 11:10 NAHUM (students who read NAH are invited to share/lead)
 11:40 HABAKKUK (students who read HAB are invited to share/lead)

LUNCH

- 1:00 OBADIAH (students who read OBA are invited to share/lead)
 1:30 HAGGAI (students who read HAG are invited to share/lead)

2:10	JOEL (students who read JOEL are invited to share/lead)
2:40	JONAH (students who read JON are invited to share/lead)
3:10	MALACHI (students who read MAL are invited to share/lead)
3:45	SUMMARY AND QUESTIONS
4:00	REVIEW OF WEEKEND II ASSIGNMENTS
4:15	ADJOURN

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WEEKEND II

READING ASSIGNMENTS FOR OCTOBER 9-10

- Read Brueggemann's *Spirituality of the Psalms*
- Read Clifford's *Wisdom Literature*
- Read ONE of the following – Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, or Job – ENTIRELY.
- Read Psalm 1 OR Psalm 74 OR Psalm 100 each day for one week. Keep a brief journal of the new insights you notice each day as you read the psalm: How does your interpretation grow as you read daily? How does your understanding of God grow? Your awareness of yourself?

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS FOR OCTOBER 9-10

- Choose a brief text from one of the prophets (no more than 10-20 verses) and exegete the text. Write a two-page summary of how you exegeted the text and what interpretation/conclusion you arrived at. Include all sources you use in exegeting the text. Be prepared to share your insights with the class on Friday evening.
- Write a two-page summary of *Spirituality of the Psalms*. In particular, be able to clarify the differences between psalms of orientation, disorientation, and reorientation. Which of these psalms best describes this moment in the world? The nation? Your personal life? How can we use these various types of psalms to speak God's word to our people?
- Write a three-page page summary on the historical context and message of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, or Job.
- Write a one-page reflection paper on Psalm 1 OR Psalm 74 OR Psalm 100. Keep a brief journal as you read the psalm daily to notice how your interpretation of the psalm grows as you read daily. What situation does this psalm address? How does the psalm speak to your life? To your ministry?
- Write a one-page paper using a "psalm of disorientation" that helps you process the experience of living in the age of COVID-19.

IN-CLASS PARTICIPATION FOR OCTOBER 9-10

- Be prepared to participate in a discussion on the textbooks in class.
- Be prepared to share with the class your paper on Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, or Job.

- Be prepared to share with the class your “psalm of disorientation” and the insights you gained from it that will help you in the age of COVID-19.

TENTATIVE WEEKEND II SCHEDULE

FRIDAY

- 5:45 COS Worship
- 6:45 Welcome/Reintroductions
- 6:55 ASSIGNMENT: DISCUSSION OF EXEGESIS PAPERS ON THE PROPHETS
- 8:00 THE ROLE OF WISDOM LITERATURE IN SCRIPTURE
- 8:15 PROVERBS (students who wrote reflection papers on PROV will share with the class)
- 9:15 ECCLESIASTES (students who wrote reflection papers on ECCL will share with the class)
- 10:00 Adjourn for the evening

SATURDAY

- 7:45 SONG OF SOLOMON
- 9:30 JOB (students who wrote reflection papers on JOB will share with the class)
- 11:00 PSALMS (discuss Brueggemann’s book here): Viewing the psalms as prayers of orientation, disorientation, and new orientation

LUNCH

- 1:00 PSALMS (continued: students will share their “reflection psalm” papers and discuss their papers on the “psalms of disorientation”)
- 3:00 FINAL EXAM
- 4:15 EVALUATION FORM/ADJOURN

GRADING SYSTEM

- 25% - In-class participation
- 50% - Written assignments
- 25% - Final Exam (the final exam will be given Saturday October 10, 2020; it will be composed of short-answer questions)

COURSE INSTRUCTOR

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