E Course of Study 421 Bible IV
Prophets, Psalms and Wisdom Literature

Meeting Dates: July 19-24, 2020   Class time: 8:00-11:30 am, Monday-Friday
Instructor: Rev. Kenneth D. Hutchens, Ph.D.
Phone: (217) 390-1566 (c) Email: Brokenhutchens@gmail.com

This course continues the interpretation of the developing institutions and traditions of ancient Israel and the examination of the varying ways in which the Hebrew people understood crucial events in their history as acts of God. It includes a focus on key texts of the Old Testament as scripture, as well as historical and literary documents. Attention will be given to the history of the Israelites following the fall of the Northern Kingdom, prophecy in the exilic and post-exilic periods, the wisdom literature, the liturgical literature, and the development of apocalyptic literature.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1) Formation of an historical overview of the later life and faith of ancient Israel.

2) Exegesis of selected biblical passages that illustrate key points in the history of Israel and the role of scripture.

3) Ongoing development of an exegetical approach to the Bible.

4) Reflection on the utilization of exegesis in preaching and other pastoral functions.

5) Consideration of the ways God worked in the lives of the people found in these biblical materials.

6) Application of these studies to the concerns and issues of the present.

BOOKS

Required

The Bible. The New Oxford Annotated Bible (A modern scholarly translation such as the NRSV is recommended).


Reference

INSTRUCTIONS

1) Read the assigned chapters and pages or view the Moodle assignment. Take notes and answer the questions completely. Do not quote extensively from the texts you read or hear. Digest the ideas and information and then put the answers in your own words. **Focus on the Bible readings.**

2) Follow the approximate lengths given for each section of written work.

3) Type or print your written work with one-inch margins and double spacing of lines. Use a 10-12 point font and do not use script, condensed, or all caps.

4) Include a header with your name and page number. You do not have to repeat the question but use the appropriate number of the question at the beginning of each answer.

5) Ideas and information should be stated in your own words, not in the words of the authors you read. If you do quote from a printed text you must use quotation marks and note the source (including pages) in parentheses at the end of each usage. Quotations should never be more than a sentence or two in length.

6) Add a title page that includes: a) the name and number of the course; b) your name, c) the date of the first day of class, and d) your Personal Identification number obtained from Pamela Frost (pfrst@gbhem.org) at the General Board of Higher Education.


8) Make a copy of your typed material and bring it with you for your own use during the class meetings.

**Note on Plagiarism:** Using other people’s materials (whether from a book, journal, teacher, another student, sermon or lectionary aid) without documentation is unacceptable behavior. Such activity, known as plagiarism, usually means failure for the course with notification sent to the Conference Course of Study Registrar and the Division of Ordained Ministry. Professors will report all instances of plagiarism to the Director of Course of Study. The Director will arrange for a meeting with the professor and student, and the student will be given an opportunity to explain the situation. The Director, in consultation with the professor, will make a decision about what action is appropriate for a first instance of plagiarism. Such action could include rewriting the material or failure of the course. A brief summary of the meeting will be prepared by the Director and placed in the student’s file in the Course of Study Office and kept there until the student completes the Course of Study Curriculum. If a second instance of plagiarism is documented, the student will fail the course and the Director will determine what other consequences may apply.
Note on Inclusive Language
In 1986 the AAR (American Academy of Religion) Publications Committee prepared and approved an Inclusive Language Policy. For the purposes of this policy, exclusive language is defined as a consistent pattern of English usage where the male is taken to be the normative human person; i.e., the word "man" connotes both the male and the human being as such.
Sensitivity to issues of inclusive language is required for all written and oral work related to the course. Students are expected to avoid using only gender specific language for God.
Additionally, this course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is indicated on the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to correct me on your preferred gender pronoun. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

GRADING

Pre-Residential Assignments (60%)  
All pre-residential assignments should be submitted to the instructor as one file according to the parameters above at Brokenhutchens@gmail.com and coshomework@garrett.edu by June 15, 2020.
This hybrid course requires students to complete some assignments before participating in the on-site sessions. These assignments are designed to acquaint students with foundational understandings of the subject matter as well as provide them with opportunities to “test out” different applications of the material. Pre-residential assignments will include viewing material, readings and short essays responding to questions as listed below.

Class Attendance and Participation (20%)  
As this is a participatory-intense course students must: 1) come prepared to discuss all assigned material in an informed, intelligent, critical (wrestling with author’s views) manner and 2) take an active role in all group work and communal engagement activities. Class discussions and assignments will focus on the Bible, textbooks and other readings/resources as assigned by the instructor. During discussions, we will treat one another’s ideas with respect.

Tests (20%)  
Students will demonstrate fluency with the Prophetic and Writings of the Old Testament via two tests. Tests will cover reading material as well as in class lectures and assignments. These tests will be given at the beginning of class on Wednesday and Friday during the residential portion of the course. There will be no makeup tests.
ASSIGNMENTS

Part One: The Prophets of Israel Continued

JUDAH ALONE: FROM THE FALL OF ISRAEL UNTIL THE FALL OF JUDAH

1. Isaiah of Jerusalem

Readings: 2 Kings 18-20; Isaiah 1-2; 5-11; 29; 31; Boadt 254-295.

Questions: (1) According to 2 Kings 18-20 what role did Isaiah play with the king? How is Jerusalem delivered from the Assyrians?
(2) Is God pleased with Judah according to Isaiah 1-2? What do the people need to do? It is too late to change?
(3) What does the prophet see in Isaiah 6? What does he do?
(4) According to Isaiah 5 what does God expect from his people? What has God received?
(5) How will God react to Assyrian boasting in Isaiah 10 and 31?
(6) What are the characteristics of the Messiah according to Isaiah 9 and 11? (1.5 pages)

2. Zephaniah and Josiah's Reform

Readings: Zephaniah 1-3; 2 Kings 21:1-23:30; Deuteronomy 5-6; 12-13; 18:14-22; Boadt 296-314.

Questions: (1) According to Zephaniah what kinds of sins are being practiced in Judah?
(2) What were the sins of Manasseh according to 2 Kings? How was the book of the law found? How was it authenticated? What steps for reform does Josiah take?
(3) What are the indications that Deuteronomy may be the book of the law leading to Josiah’s reforms? (1.5 pages)

3. The Fall of Assyria: Jonah, Nahum and Habakkuk

Readings: Jonah 1-4; Nahum 1-3; Habakkuk 1-3; Boadt, 408-412.

Questions: (1) After a long oppression of the peoples of the Ancient Near East, Assyria’s capital of Ninevah was destroyed in 612 B.C. According to Nahum what role did God play in the destruction of the city? Why?
(2) How does the person of faith respond to God’s actions in history according to Habakkuk 2:1-4 and 3:16-19?
(3) What is God’s desire for the people of Ninevah in the book of Jonah? Do you see any conflict between these three prophetic books? Why or why not? (1 page)

4. Jeremiah and the Fall of Judah

Readings: 2 Kings 23:31-25:30; Jeremiah 1; 7; 11; 20; 26-28; 32; 36; Boadt, 315-334.

Questions: (1) What was the fate of Judah, Jerusalem, and the Temple by the hands of the Babylonians? Why does 2 Kings end with the release of Jehoiachin?
(2) How did Jeremiah react to his call to be a prophet in Jeremiah 1? How did God
reassure him? Was Jeremiah’s message to be predominantly constructive or destructive?
(3) What were the themes of Jeremiah’s Temple sermon in chapter 7? According to Jeremiah 26 how did his hearers react? What saved Jeremiah’s life?
(4) How is Jeremiah to respond to the opposition in Jeremiah 11 and 20? What is Jeremiah’s reaction to God?
(5) What did Jeremiah advise the king to do in chapters 27-28? Why did he wear a yoke? What did he do when Hananiah broke the yoke?
(6) What was the symbolic action of Jeremiah in chapter 32? What did it signify?
(7) What did Jeremiah dictate to Baruch in chapter 36? What did the king do with the scroll? How did Jeremiah respond? (2 pages)

THE PERIOD OF THE BABYLONIAN EXILE

1. Ezekiel
   **Readings:** Ezekiel 1-3; 8-11; 13; 33:21-22; 34; 37; 43:1-9; 47:1-12; Boadt, 335-354.
   **Questions:** (1) What does Ezekiel see during his call to ministry in chapters 1-3? What is the responsibility of the watchman?
(2) Where is the prophet taken in chapters 8-11? What does he see the people doing? What is God’s response? What happens in Ezekiel 43:1-9?
(3) What is the problem in Ezekiel 13? What is the result for the people?
(4) How have the leaders of Israel failed according to Ezekiel 34? How will God respond to this problem?
(5) Who do the dry bones represent in Ezekiel 37? Who are the two sticks? What are God’s plans in both cases?
(6) What is the impact of the water flowing from the Temple in Ezekiel 47? (2 pages)

2. The Exile
   **Readings:** Lamentations 1-2; 4-5; Psalm 137; Boadt, 355-366
   **Questions:** (1) What was the mood of the people in Judah and exile after the destruction of Jerusalem according to Lamentations and Psalm 137?
(2) Who brought about this catastrophe?
(3) Do these writers see the destruction as something deserved by Judah? (1 page)

3. Joel and Obadiah
   **Readings:** Joel 1-3; Obadiah 1-21; Boadt 406-408.
   **Questions:** (1) How is the locust plague understood in Joel? How should the people respond? Is the Day of the Lord something to long for? What will be the result of God pouring out his spirit?
(2) Why will Edom experience judgment according to Obadiah? (1 page)

RETURN AND REBUILDING OF THE HOMELAND

1. Isaiah of Babylon
   **Readings:** Isaiah 40; 44-45; 49-50; 52-53; 56; 58; 61; Boadt 366-378.
   **Questions:** (1) What message of good tidings does Isaiah bring the exiles in chapters 40 and 49?
(2) How is God using Cyrus according to Isaiah 44-45? Is Cyrus aware of this?
(3) What is the folly of idolaters according to Isaiah 44?
(4) What is the servant of God to suffer and accomplish in Isaiah 49:1-6; 50:4-9, and 52:13-53:12?
(5) What is the promise to the obedient foreigner and eunuch in Isaiah 56?
(6) What kind of fast does God want according to Isaiah 58?
(7) What is the mission of the one sent by God in Isaiah 61? (2 pages)

2. Ezra and Nehemiah
   **Readings:** Ezra 1; 3; 4:1-5; 6-7; Nehemiah 1-2; 4; 6:15-19; 8-9; 13; Boadt, 379-406.
   **Questions:** (1) What did Cyrus do for the Jewish exiles according to Ezra 1 and 6? How does this indicate that Persian policy towards conquered peoples was different from those of Assyria and Babylonia?
(2) What steps did the returning Jews take to restore proper worship according to Ezra 3? What was their response to the Samaritan offer to help in Ezra 4:1-5?
(3) According to Ezra 7 who is Ezra and why did he want to go to Jerusalem?
(4) Who is Nehemiah according to Nehemiah 1-2 and why does he want to go to Jerusalem?
(5) What problems did Nehemiah encounter in rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem in Nehemiah 4 and 6:15-19? How were they overcome?
(6) What does Ezra bring and read to the people in Nehemiah 8-9? What is their reaction?
(7) What problems did Nehemiah confront in Nehemiah 13? How did he react to them? (2 pages)

3. The Chronicler's History
   **Readings:** 1 Chronicles 16-17; 28; 2 Chronicles 7; 33-35.
   **Questions:** (1) According to 1 Chronicles what is the king’s role in worship? Who planned and prepared to build the Temple? Who actually built the Temple?
(2) What is the choice given to Israel in 2 Chronicles 7?
(3) How did Manasseh change according to 2 Chronicles 33?
(4) Where did Josiah fail according to 2 Chronicles 34-35? (1 page)

4. Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi
   **Readings:** Haggai 1-2; Zechariah 3; 6:9-15; 12-14; Malachi 1-4.
   **Questions:** (1) What motivation does Haggai give for rebuilding the Temple? How does the second Temple compare to the first one? What is God about to do according to Haggai?
(2) What is the vision Zechariah has of Joshua? What is the promise made to him in Zechariah 3 and 6:9-15?
(3) What are the key events that will accompany the Day of the Lord according to Zechariah 12-14?
(4) How have the priests failed God according to Malachi 1?
(5) How have the people broken covenant in Malachi 2?
(6) According to Malachi 3 how are the people robbing God?
(7) What promise ends the book? (1.5 pages)
Part Two: The Writings

WORSHIP AND ADORATION: SONGS OF PRAISE AND LOVE

1. Psalms
   **Readings:** Psalms 2; 15; 19; 22-24; 30; 45; 51; 72; 110; 118; 150; Boadt, 230-253; Brueggemann, *Spirituality of the Psalms*, 1-74; Watch The Psalms Project’s “Psalms 25” and Jason Silver’s “Psalms 25:1-20” YouTube videos (links on Moodle).

   **Questions:** (1) Several Psalms are concerned with the life of the king. Psalms 2 and 110 are focused on the king’s coronation. What is the source of the king’s power according to these psalms? What does Psalm 45 celebrate? How is a good king to reign according to Psalm 72?
   (2) Psalms 15 and 24 focus on those entering the Temple to worship. What are the requirements for entry into God’s presence?
   (3) Psalms 22 and 51 are individual laments. What is the problem in each case? What does the psalmist ask from God? What is promised to God?
   (4) Psalm 19 is a hymn while Psalm 30 is an individual thanksgiving. For what does the psalmist rejoice in each?
   (5) What are the two primary images used for God in Psalm 23?
   (6) Psalm 118 is a communal psalm. What is celebrated in Psalm 118?
   (7) What does Psalm 150, the conclusion of the Psalms, call people to do? (2 pages)

2. Concerning Love: Song of Songs and Ruth
   **Readings:** Song of Songs 1; 4; 8; Ruth 1-4; Boadt 422-23, 434-435.

   **Questions:** (1) Who is described in Song 4? Which of the five senses are involved in this description?
   (2) How is love described in Song 8?
   (3) How does Ruth show her loyalty in the book of Ruth? How does she get Boaz to serve as a “redeemer”?
   (4) What kinds of love do these two books celebrate? (1 page)

THE WISDOM LITERATURE

1. Proverbs
   **Readings:** Proverbs 1-3; 7; 9-11; 22-23; 31:10-31; Boadt, 413-427.

   **Questions:** (1) According to Proverbs 1-3; 7, 9-11 chapters who can benefit from wisdom? What is the beginning of wisdom? What are the sources of wisdom? Who are the competitors for Lady Wisdom? Where do their ways lead?
   (2) According to Proverbs 22-23 how should one treat the poor and orphaned? How should parents raise children? Do you agree or disagree?
   (3) What are the qualities of a good wife according to Proverbs 31:10-31? (1.5 pages)

2. Ecclesiastes
   **Readings:** Ecclesiastes 1-4; 9; 11-12.
Questions: (1) According to Ecclesiastes is wisdom valuable? What are some of the things the writer found to be vanity? Why are these things vanity? (2) What view of time is expressed in Ecclesiastes 3? (3) Do things always turn our justly in life? What happens after death according to Ecclesiastes? Do the final two verses agree with the message of the rest of the book? (1 page)

3. Job

Readings: Job 1-7; 38-42.

Questions: (1) Who is Satan and what is his role according to Job 1-2? How does Job react to disaster? What do the three friends of Job do at first? (2) Is Job’s lament in chapter 3 different from his earlier responses? What does Job hope for? (3) What reasons does Eliphaz find in Job 4-5 for Job’s suffering? Does Job accept his ideas in chapters 6-7? Does he find comfort from Eliphaz? (4) Does God answer Job’s questions about his suffering in Job 38-41? Why does God speak about creation? (5) Does Job feel reconciled to God in chapter 42? Is the book complete without Job 42:7-17? (2 pages)

APOCALYPTIC AND CONCLUSIONS

1. Daniel and Apocalyptic

Readings: Daniel 1-3; 6-9; 12; Boadt, 428-449.

Questions: (1) How did Daniel and his companions become royal servants in Daniel 1? Who is the first king they served? What was their first test of faith? (2) What is the test in Daniel 2? How is Daniel able to survive? What does the dream signify? (3) What is the test in Daniel 3? How is it overcome? (4) How is the king forced to throw Daniel in the lion’s den in chapter 6? How might these four chapters and their tests relate to a people struggling to hold onto their Jewish faith under foreign rulers? (5) What is the vision of Daniel in chapter 7? How does it reassure the people? (6) What are the various times given for the visions to be fulfilled in chapters 7-9 and 12? What role does confession and repentance play in these chapters? (2 pages)

2. Esther

Readings: Esther 1-8.

Questions: (1) Where is the story of Esther set? What leads to the king’s search for a new wife? How did Esther become Queen? (2) Why did Haman seek to destroy the Jews? What makes it difficult for Esther to intervene? What is the fate of Haman? How is genocide averted? (3) What values are shown as admirable in the book? (1 page)

3. Canon and Later Developments

Readings: Boadt, 450-481.
**Questions:** (1) Which of Boadt’s ten themes of Old Testament theology do you see as most important today?
(2) What role does the Old Testament play in your faith and ministry? (1 page)