



BL 622 *Advanced Hebrew Exegesis (Psalms)* (3)

Winter 2014

Instructor: R. R. Remin

Contacting the Instructor

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Class Times: Thursdays 2:30-5:15

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Class Location: L2100

Course Description

An advanced study of Hebrew grammar for the purpose of gaining insight into the meaning of the Old Testament text. This study will enable the student to understand a text in more detail as well as how the grammatical structures of Hebrew may have lent themselves to different interpretations. This course may be repeated for credit depending on the biblical books selected for study.

This study of an Old Testament book based on the Hebrew text provides an opportunity for the student to practice the integration of Hebrew language study and exegesis with an intensive study of a selected biblical book. The book selected varies each semester. Course may be repeated for credit as the books under consideration change.

Student Outcomes

1. The student will review and learn grammatical elements of biblical Hebrew as well as the distinguishing characteristics of Hebrew poetry.
2. The student will begin to learn how to analyze Hebrew poetry in terms its literary and rhetorical characteristics so as to understand how Hebrew poetry communicates and what it communicates.
3. This study includes an analysis of the various sub-genres of the Psalms – their forms and the implications for interpretation both ancient and modern.
4. The student will be challenged to develop effective strategies to communicate the meaning and messages of the Psalms to a modern audience by means of teaching and preaching, and personal reflection.

Course Schedule

The meets every Thursday, except January 30th, until the end of the semester's scheduled classes on April the tenth.

April 19th is the absolute last day for the submission of assignments for this course.

We begin by reading, translating and discussing the Hebrew text of Psalms 1, 131, 2, 3, 22, 5, 8, 23 and 45, and then proceed to read as many Psalms as time will allow.

Interspersed with each class's discussion of a Psalm will be lectures on the nature of Hebrew poetry, genres of various Psalms, Hebrew grammar and lexicography as well as opportunity to reflect on how we use the Psalms in worship and ministry.

Course Requirements

The student is required to:

1. Read and prepare selected Psalms for translation and discussion in class. Discussion in class will focus on points of grammar, characteristics of Hebrew poetry, the meaning of individual psalms, as well as a strategy for effective communication of this message to a modern audience.
2. Write four research papers relating to the Hebrew Psalms. Consult with the professor before tackling a topic. Your selection of papers should include a range of subjects such as grammar, sub-genre, analysis of lyric poetry or even a word study on "bones" for example or the use of wisdom literature in the psalms, or psalms in the prophets. At least one will be an analysis of one whole psalm and will include a concise treatment of contextual (genre), syntactical (parallelism), and verbal (one word study) analyses as well as theological reflection and homiletical notes.

Do not write about "Selah" or the order of the psalms in their five books!

3. Read at least 1,000 pages in secondary literature on the Psalms as directed by the professor as well as various handouts provided to the student. The following list is intended to be illustrative but not exhaustive. Keep a record of your reading.
 - a. Kathleen Norris, "Why the Psalms Scare Us," *Christianity Today*, (July 15, 1996) 19-24.
 - b. Daniel J. Estes, "The Hermeneutics of Biblical Lyric Poetry," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 152 (October-December 1995) 413-430.
 - c. Leland Ryken, "'I Have Used Similitudes': the Poetry of the Bible, The Bible as Literature Part 3," *Bibliotheca Sacra* (1990).

- d. Leland Ryken, ““With Many Such Parables”: the Imagination as a Means of Grace, the Bible as Literature Part 4,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* (1990).
- e. Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* (Word Biblical Commentary, 1983).
- f. Thomas G. Long, *Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible* (Fortress, 1989). Relevant chapters.
- g. Walter Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms* (Augsburg, 1984).
- h. Walter Brueggemann, *The Psalms & the Life of Faith* (ed. Patrick D. Miller, Fortress, 1995).
- i. Patrick D. Miller, *Interpreting the Psalms* (Fortress, 1986).
- j. Claus Westermann, *The Psalms, Structure, Content & Message* (Augsburg, 1980).
- k. Various articles from journals, the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* and the *Interpreter’s Bible Dictionary* in both.

Required Texts and Recommended Reading

Students are required to have regular access to the following texts.

1. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, ed. K. Elliger and W. Rudolf (Stuttgart, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967- 1977).
2. Brown, Francis, Driver, S.R., Briggs, Charles A. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Clarendon Press, 1907).
3. John Joseph Owens, *Analytical Key to the Old Testament* (Baker, 1989).
4. Computer Software. Investigate software options to assist the study of the Greek and Hebrew Testaments. (There is no software package for just one of these languages.) Which program is immaterial. Investing in one is essential. Try out these websites for the best programs. The programs will be discussed in class. But as you investigate ask these simple questions.
 - Which Greek and Hebrew texts are included in the program?
 - Which translations are included – *LXX, Vulgate, RSV, NRSV, NIV, NASB, etc.*?
 - What can be added to this platform? *BDB, Word Biblical Commentary, Bauer-Ardnt-Gingrich, TDNW, Van Gemeren*?
 - All of these programs have “tagged text.” All of them do concordance type searches. But do they have GRAMCORD? What’s GRAMCORD?
 - Do they have a simple mouse click or macro to link to commentaries and lexicons which come with the software package or can be added to the platform?

Here are the three most commonly used programs. All three provide on line demos.

Bibloi 8.0 -- <http://www.silvermnt.com/bibloi.htm> This is the one used in class.

Logos Bible Software -- <http://www.logos.com/> Special rates? Many variations.

Accordance Bible Soft. -- <http://www.accordancebible.com/> MAC platform,

The following books are highly recommended and may contain required reading from time to time in this course. Remember they all have indices for psalms by number and verse.

5. Bruce K. Waltke, M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (1990). Gesenius, E. Kautzsch, A. E. Cowley, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (various). GKC is also available on line (someone retyped the whole book) – <http://www.biblecentre.net/ot/ges/gr/hegr-Index.html>
6. Gesenius, Wilhelm, E. Kautzsch, and A. E. Cowley. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910. Also available on line.
7. William .S. LaSor, *Handbook of Biblical Hebrew, an Inductive Approach Based on the Hebrew Text of Esther*, 2 Vol. (W.B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1978).
8. Ronald J. Williams, John C. Beckman, *Hebrew Syntax* (2007). Or the previous edition, Ronald J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax* (1992).

These commentaries are high recommended and with others will serve their purpose at various points in the course. (This is primarily a Hebrew reading course and not a reading the commentaries course.) Pay particular attention to three volumes on the Psalms in the *Word Biblical Commentary* series and the *Anchor Bible* commentaries on the Psalms. Beware that, although sometimes you need commentaries for information as is the case here, commentaries are for the greatest part “thought stoppers.”

Do not neglect to read the articles in the best of the “bible dictionaries.” Start with the articles on Psalms and the other suggested articles there.

9. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, 5 vol., VanGemeren, Willem A. ed. (Zondervan, 1997). **DOTTE** includes the only published dictionary of semantic domains for Hebrew. Includes a “Guide to OT Theology and Exegesis” which amounts to a 215 page hermeneutics course which includes among other things details on how to do word studies. Includes a topical dictionary and numerous indices. cf. Colin Brown DNTT

10. *Theological Dictionary of the OT*, 10 vol., G. Johannes Botterwick, Helmer Ringgren, eds. (Eerdmans, 1974-1981). **TDOT**
11. *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6 vol., Noel D. Freedman, et al. eds. (Doubleday, 1992). **ABD**
12. *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, 5 vol., George A. Buttrick, ed. (Abingdon, 1964) and now the revised edition edited by K. Sakenfeld. **IDB**

Use this Hebrew English concordance (or an electronic concordance) when you need a concordance. Do not even ask about concordances by Cruden, Young, or Strong, lest you evoke less than gracious comments from the professor about crudeness, youth and excessive physical strength.

13. *The Hebrew-English Concordance to the Old Testament with the New International Version*, Kohlenberger III, John R., ed. (Zondervan, 1998). \$144.00 CAN

The following are more general books on Hebrew exegesis and excellent reading for you.

14. James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford University Press, 1961). This is all about Hebrew language and its correct use in exegesis.
15. R.B.Y. Scott, "Priesthood, Prophecy, Wisdom, and the Knowledge of God," 80 *JBL* (1961) 1-15. This was Scott's presidential address (1960) at the end of the year he was president of the Society of Biblical Literature. Scott was a Canadian clergyman (United Church of Canada) and academic who graduated from Knox College at the University of Toronto, was Dean at McGill and then became a faculty member at Princeton. He maintained a steadfast commitment to the social gospel.
16. Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination* (2nd ed., (1976) 2001). Yes it says "prophetic" but it's relevant to the Psalms as well.
17. Rad, Gerhard von, "The Origin of the Concept of the Day of Yahweh," *Journal of Semitic Studies*, IV (1959), 97-108. This article will also teach you about correct methodology. I'm personally tired of all the sloppy "research" and writing about the Day of Yahweh.
18. Harrison, R. K. *Introduction to the Old Testament*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969). A review of everything that was ever done in OT scholarship but to 1969 by genre and by book.
19. La Sor, William, David Allan Hubbard, and Frederic William Bush. *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1982, 1996.) However you might want to start here first!

20. Bright, John and William P. Brown. *A History of Israel*. 4th ed. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 2000. This standard history of Israel has excellent analyses how the prophets related to the politics and history of their particular century. Pay particular attention to the section on the Davidic monarchy.

Preaching on the prophets?

21. Thomas G. Long, *Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible* (Fortress, 1989). Relevant chapters. Read this before you ever preach on a prophetic text.

Course Grade

The final grade will be determined as follows:

- 40% -- for preparation of the Hebrew text and participation in discussion with the professor
- 40% -- for the exegetical notes for six psalms.
- 20% -- for reading in secondary sources.

Very Important Notes

1. Remember The Rules For The Class
 - Have fun!
 - Make mistakes!
 - Ask dumb questions! There are no dumb questions!
 - Cheat in class!
 - Consider this classroom a safe zone! There are no topics which are off limit.
2. All hand written such as tests, examinations, and vocabulary tests must be written in ink! Your professor cannot and will not read anything written in pencil.
1. All other assignments must be printed and submitted in hard copy. (Do not submit electronic copies and expect me to print them.) Follow these requirements, when preparing your assignments!
 - All printing is in black ink and on white paper. Twelve point font. There are no other colors or shading. No borders around pages.

- Margins must be standard. Spacing is 1.5 or double. Do not mess with margins or spacing or font size in an attempt to decrease or increase the number of pages of the assignment.
- There will be no cover page. One staple in the upper left corner. In the upper left corner of the first page, include the following information in this order.
 - The name of the assignment and the text. E.g. Contextual Analysis, Romans 12
 - Student's name which is the same as the name under which you registered in this course. Do not include your student number.
 - On the next line the words, "Ambrose Seminary" must appear.
 - On another line the date on which the assignment was submitted.
- The fonts used must be twelve point standard fonts. The basic fonts such as Calibri, Times New Roman, Arial, etc.
- Any Greek and/or Hebrew in the assignment must be in a Greek or Hebrew font. Transliteration is unacceptable except in a direct quotation such as the title of a publication or an article.

Do not put quotation marks around nor italicize nor underline any Greek or Hebrew words which are in Greek or Hebrew fonts! (The rule is that in papers written in English, foreign words which are written in the English alphabet are italicized or underlined but never both. Words written in any other alphabet besides the English/Roman one, need no other treatment.)

Transliteration is not acceptable these papers except in a direct quotation or a title of a published work.

Students will be provided with fonts upon request. However, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the fonts are correctly printed before the paper is handed in. (Not all printers will correctly print all fonts.) This is the student's responsibility. Papers with incorrectly printed fonts will not be read. In the event of "font printing failure" the Greek or Hebrew words may be hand printed in black ink. (This was how it was done from the time of the invention of the type writer until the passing of the same when personal computers were invented.)

- Footnotes and bibliography must be consistent in detail and in an acceptable format which identifies who wrote what, when and where it was published.
- One (and only one) staple in the upper left corner. Do not use plastic covers, rings, binders, etc. Think "Adam's ale!"

2. You may **contact your professor** by various means.

- a. Office Hours. These Office Hours on campus are subject to meetings called by higher authorities (president, dean, registrar), previously scheduled meetings with other students, the instructor's health (doctors' appointments, medical emergencies), snow storms, ice storms, highway closures, automobile failure, and/or "the crick don't raise" and "California doesn't freeze over."

Book an appointment via email so that I know you're coming and you receive notification of cancelation or being preempted by another appointment (the above not withstanding).

Your professor is typically available as follows.

- i. Monday Afternoons (Mornings are given to meetings)
- ii. Tuesday Not available
- iii. Wednesday Before 1:00 p.m.
- iv. Thursday Mornings and before 2:15
- v. Friday Before 1:00 p.m.

- b. Email in the office: rremin@ambrose.edu
- c. Voice in the office: 410-2000 ext 7906

3. **Absences** are intolerable because of the nature of the subject being learned and the manner in which this course is taught, namely the inductive method. If you must miss a class, please work through the lesson(s) missed and then come to class ready for the next lesson. Come to the instructor with any specific problems or questions. In the event you cannot be prepared, you are better being in class unprepared than not in class at all. Too many absences will affect your final grade either by virtue of a poor assignments or an adjustment of your final grade by the instructor.

4. **Classroom Etiquette.** The following activities are considered poor classroom etiquette:

- Coming in late,
- Talking while someone else is talking,
- Disruptive behavior,
- Consumption of meals as opposed to minor snacks,
(Definition. If a knife, fork, spoon or sticks are required it's a meal!)
- Consumption of snacks in a noisy, smelly and/or disruptive manner,
- Personal grooming,
- Use of electronic devices such as cell phones, *i-pods*, *etc.*,
- Use of laptops for purposes (*e.g.* watching videos, playing solitaire) not directly connected to the class,
and
- The practice of any behaviours considered impolite in adult company or in contravention of the laws of Alberta, specifically those prohibited while driving a motor vehicle.

Depending on the degree and/or frequency of the breach(es) of etiquette, the professor may display his displeasure in any one or more of the following manners:

- Frown, scowl, rolling eye balls (his not yours),
- Utterance of sounds of disgust,
- Sarcastic comments,
- Utterance of specific prohibitions,
- Dismissal of a student from the class,
- Ending the class prematurely, or
- In extreme cases the professor's immediate departure from the classroom.

In extreme cases, in cases where the professor determines that a student's behaviour, attitude or consumables are affecting other students negatively, the offensive individual and "theirs" will be summarily dismissed from the classroom for a "time out" the length of which will be determined unilaterally by the professor.

And now the fine print of this agreement.

5. **Grades for the course.** The available letters for course grades are as follows:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
A+	
A	Excellent
A-	
B+	
B	Good
B-	
C+	
C	Satisfactory
C-	
D+	
D	Minimal Pass
F	Failure

Please note that final grades will be available on your student portal. Printed grade sheets are no longer mailed out.

An **appeal for change of grade** on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar in writing within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal to review final grades. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

6. **Some more very important dates.**

The **last day to enter** a course without permission and /or **voluntary withdrawal** from a course without financial penalty (**drop**) – **Sunday, January 20, 2014** (Winter semester). These courses will not appear on the student's transcript.

*Students may change the designation of any class from credit to audit, or drop out of the "audit" up to the "drop" date indicated above. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees. Please note that this is a **new policy**, beginning in the 2010-2011 academic year.*

Withdrawal from courses after the Registration Revision period will not be eligible for tuition refund. The last day to **voluntarily withdraw from a course without academic penalty (withdraw)** – **Friday, March 21, 2014**. A grade of "W" will appear on the student's transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

7. It is **the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar**. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

8. **Extensions and Alternative Examination Dates.** Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period **unless they have received permission for a "Course Extension" from the Registrar's Office**. Requests for course extensions or an **alternative examination time** must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the appropriate deadline (as listed in the Academic Calendar. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control." The deadline this semester is **March 31, 2014**.

9. **Plagiarism and Cheating.** We at Ambrose are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University College as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.
10. Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records.