



NT 645 The Use of the OT in the NT (3) Winter 2014

Professor: Robert S. Snow, PhD
Select Mondays 2:30-5:15 pm
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1. Course Description:

This course examines the ways in which the New Testament authors use the Old Testament in their writings. While it is easy to understand that they typically quote, allude to, or echo the OT, problems arise when these authors appear to distort the original meaning of OT passage or claim that an OT text is prophecy when it is not. This has led some modern scholars to conclude that the NT writers merely use the OT to advance their dogmatic agendas with no regard for the larger contexts of the passages that they use. Others argue that these authors are so Christo-centric in their focus that they read Christ into OT passages that manifestly have nothing to do with him and in this way have a very decontextualized use of the OT. In this course, then, we will start with what the scholars have to say about the use of the OT in the NT, before turning to a variety of examples in the NT, to determine what approach most accurately describes how the NT authors went about their hermeneutical task of interpreting the significance of Jesus Christ in light of the OT for the communities that they addressed. This will involve the development of a method that students can then use for their own personal study of NT intertextuality.

2. Course Objectives:

- a. to understand modern approaches to the question of the use of the OT in the NT.
- b. to determine the various ways in which NT authors use the OT, i.e. from specific OT passages to entire books.
- c. to develop a rigorous method for determining the meaning that a NT author is communicating by his use of the OT.

3. Course Requirements:

- a. **Class readings:** In preparation for each class session, students must read the assigned readings and come prepared to discuss them with the professor and fellow students.
- b. **Questions on course readings:** In order to guide our class discussion

and help you prepare more adequately, the professor will prepare questions that will accompany the class readings referred to in point a. Your responses for all questions should be no more than 500 words and must be uploaded on Moodle by the start of the class session for which they are due. Credit will not be given for responses submitted after the beginning of the class session.

- c. **Term essay:** This will mark the crowning moment of the course in which you apply the methods learned in this course to a NT passage of your choosing, in consultation with the professor, which employs the OT in some way. All papers are due on **Monday March 24** (we will not meet that Monday) uploaded onto Moodle. You will then prepare three engaging questions for each of your classmates' papers that you will have an opportunity to ask when they (and you) present their papers on **Monday April 7**.
- d. **Three questions for term essay:** As per point c, please prepare three engaging questions for each of your classmates' papers and upload them on Moodle before the beginning of class on **Monday April 7** to receive credit for them. You will pose your questions on this day.

4. Evaluation:

- a. Responses for questions on course readings 40%
- b. Term essay 50%
- c. Term essay questions 10%

5. Grading:

| <u>Letter Grade</u> | <u>Numerical Equivalents</u> |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| A+ | 95-100 |
| A | 86-94 |
| A- | 80-85 |
| B+ | 77-79 |
| B | 73-76 |
| B- | 70-72 |
| C+ | 67-69 |
| C | 63-66 |
| C- | 60-62 |
| D+ | 55-59 |
| D | 50-54 |
| F | 0-49 |

6. Important Notes

a. Format for papers: All papers need to be double-spaced, 12 point font, Times New Roman. Number each page. Indicate word count along with your name and student number on the top right corner of the first page. No need for a title page. Upload all papers on the Moodle site. Do not email any papers to me or slide any under my door.

b. Extensions/Submissions: Extensions are highly unusual occurrences

contingent upon equally highly unusual circumstances (being too busy does not count!). A late penalty of **10%** per day including week-end days will be enforced for those who fail to submit their term paper on time.

c. Electronic etiquette: Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to engage in electronically-enabled activities unrelated to the class during a class session. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops can only be used for class-related purposes only. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

d. Academic policies: 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.

e. Academic integrity: We 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.

Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

7. Textbooks:

No required textbooks as I will provide you with assigned readings.

Schedule of topics, readings, and due dates

January 13: Introduction

1. Introduction to the seminar
2. Lecture: The covenantal story of God and its importance for NT intertextuality
3. Review assigned readings and questions, due Jan 27.

January 27: Setting the stage

1. Discussion: difficulties and challenges of NT intertextuality
 - “Matthew Twists the Scriptures” by McCasland (posted on Moodle)
 - “The Formulate-Quotations of Matthew 2 and the Problem of Communication” by France (handout)
 - “‘Who is the prophet talking about?’ Some reflections on the NT’s use of the Old” by Longenecker (handout)

Question: What are three challenges raised by these authors. Please provide an explanation of each one.

2. Discussion: current state of scholarly debate
 - “Challenges to Interpreting the Use of the OT in the New” by Beale (handout)
 - “An Assessment of Recent Developments” by Howard Marshall (handout)

Question: What are three contemporary arguments on how the NT authors use the OT?

3. Discussion: views on the relationship between the testaments from the apostolic age onward
 - Chapter 2: “History of Biblical Interpretation” by David L. Baker in *Two Testament, One Bible*.
4. Review of assigned readings and questions, due Feb 10

February 10: Presuppositions of the NT authors and the influence of their historical worlds

1. Discussion: OT framework/presuppositions of NT authors
 - Chapters 1-7 in *This is That* by F. F. Bruce
 - Chapter 3 in *History and Eschatology* by R. Bultmann

Question # 1: Why does R. Bultmann draw the conclusion, as cited by Bruce, that “there can be no continuity between New Testament Christians and the Old Testament picture of Israel as ‘an empirical historical entity’, living under God’s rule in terms of a covenant inaugurated by a historical event.” (See Bruce, p. 21, and pp. 38-39 as well as chapter 3 in *History and Eschatology*). What are some of the problems with Bultmann’s approach?

Question # 2: Indicate one or two concepts from chapters two to seven that you think are important for understanding the OT framework of the NT authors and briefly explain why.

2. Discussion: historical worlds of the NT authors

- Excerpt from *Jesus and the Faithfulness of God* by N. T. Wright
Question # 3: Why is Wright's discussion so important for understanding the historical worlds of the NT authors?

February 24: A method for the study of NT intertextuality (including guidelines for the term paper)

March 10: Various examples of the use of the OT in the NT: from the influence of a single OT text on a NT one to the influence of an entire OT book

March 17: Various examples cont'd

April 7: Presentation and discussion of term papers.